

# Briefly . . .

## International

### New World Heritage Sites and Parties

At a meeting held 7–11 December 1987 in Paris the World Heritage Committee added nine natural places to the list of World Heritage Sites: Uluru (Ayers Rock) National Park, Australia; Dja Faunal Reserve, Cameroon; Gros Morne National Park, Canada; Mt Taishan, China; Sundarbans National Park, India; Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserve, Mexico; Manu National Park, Peru; Mt Kilimanjaro National Park, Tanzania; and Hawaii Volcanoes National Park, USA. Stage II of Australia's Kakadu National Park was also added to Stage I, which was inscribed in 1987. The total number of sites on the list totals 228, of which 62 are natural sites and 15 are mixed natural/cultural. The Gambia, Thailand, Vietnam, Congo and Uganda have recently joined the Convention, bringing the total number of Parties to 100.

*CNNPA Newsletter*, 41.

### More for CITES

El Salvador acceded to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora on 30 April 1987, effective 29 July 1987, and became the 96th Party to the Convention. On 24 June 1987 New Zealand's Minister of Conservation announced that New Zealand would accede to CITES once the Trade in Endangered Species Bill was passed by Parliament. *Traffic Bulletin*, 9, 2/3.

### New HQ for Ramsar Convention

On 1 January 1988 the new international office of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention) was opened in Gland, Switzerland. The Convention was set up in 1971 as a response to the worldwide destruction of wetland sites and it has been hampered in its conservation efforts by lack of funding. In 1987 the State Parties, meeting in Canada, came to an understanding on administration, finance and policy matters to improve the effectiveness of the treaty. The Ramsar Bureau will have sections based at both the IUCN headquarters and the UK-based International Water-

fowl and Wetlands Research Bureau, which together in the past provided the Secretariat for the Contracting Parties on a voluntary basis. The Convention has 45 Contracting Members, and 382 sites on its list of wetlands of international importance, which cover more than 27 million ha.

*IUCN Press Release*, 24 December 1987.

### Storm over Japanese whaling

The Scientific Committee of the International Whaling Commission met on 15–17 December in Cambridge, UK, to discuss Japan's new 'research' whaling proposal, which involved killing 300 minke whales in the Antarctic. Of more than 15 nations at the meeting only two—Japan and Iceland—defended the scheme. Even though the IWC refused to endorse the research, Japan's whalers set off for the Antarctic regardless, the Japanese Fisheries Ministry having forced the new Prime Minister and the Japanese Foreign Ministry, who oppose the whaling, to agree. Japan's defiance of the IWC and of the bilateral agreement made with the US in 1984, in which Japan agreed to phase out its whaling by early 1988 and to stop all Antarctic whaling in early 1987, has touched off another battle in the US. The Commerce Department is prepared to invoke sanctions against the Japanese fishing industry, while the State Department is opposed to any action. Sixteen conservation and animal welfare groups are preparing to sue the State Department to force sanctions against Japan. On 22 December the Rt Hon. John Gummer MP, Minister of State at the UK's Ministry of Agriculture, Fisheries and Food, called for a postal vote of IWC members and demanded that Japan refrain from any whaling until the result was known. The IWC set 14 February as the deadline for the votes to be submitted, by which time the Antarctic whaling season would have ended.

*Monitor*, 21 and 28 December 1987; 4 January 1988. *MAFF Press Release*, 22 December 1987.

### Iceland's whaling challenged by Icelanders

Iceland's continued whaling is now being challenged at home as well as internationally. The recently formed

Icelandic 'Friends of the Whales' is protesting actively and, in a country where civil disobedience is unheard of, the group is stirring up public opinion against whaling for the first time.

*Earth First*, 22 December 1987.

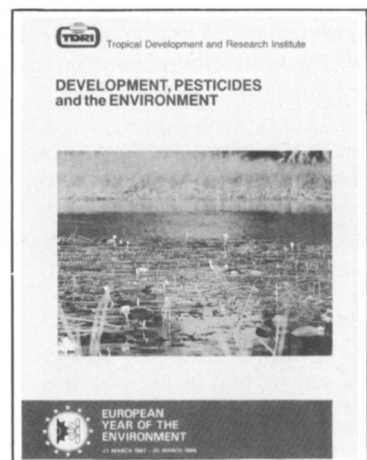
### ITTO fails to take vital step

At the annual meeting of the International Tropical Timber Organization in November in Yokohama, Japan, 16 projects were approved to develop programmes in economic information, forest management and forest industries. The crucial step towards reforms in logging methods is still awaited; widespread clearfelling continues in areas where fragile soils prevent re-forestation.

*Monitor*, 30 November 1987.

### Help in combatting the pesticide problem

A new database, ENVIRON, offers a free, fast, comprehensive service to scientists, farmers and agricultural administrators living in developing countries and working for international development organizations. The information offered covers pesticide toxicity to non-targets, pesticide persistence and residues, environmental fate of pesticides, and ecological impact of pesticides on non-target organisms. The aim is to help people minimize the inefficient and environmentally damaging uses of pesticides.



*Details from Pesticide Impact Section, Tropical Development and Research Institute, College House, Wright's Lane, London W8 5SJ, UK.*

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## Europe and North Africa

### Ban on hunting pilot whales

Traditional whaling off the Faroe Islands continues to cost the lives of thousands of pilot whales *Globicephala melaena*. The International Whaling Commission has therefore agreed to insist on a total ban on hunting this species off islands between Scotland and Iceland.

*Naturopa newsletter-nature*, 87–8.

### Varied fortunes of Arctic foxes

The Arctic fox *Alopex lagopus* is declining in numbers in Scandinavia despite the fact that it is classified as endangered and protected accordingly. By contrast, in Iceland the species is flourishing; the foxes are considered as pests and the Government pays farmers to kill them. A research effort, Project Arctic Fox, has been set up by the University of Stockholm in Sweden to discover the reasons for this difference. One suggestion is that red foxes *Vulpes vulpes*, which have invaded the breeding areas of Arctic foxes in Scandinavia, compete with them for food, prey on their cubs and transmit diseases. Iceland has no red foxes and also no voles or lemmings, whose fluctuating populations in Scandinavia are believed to affect the Arctic fox's breeding patterns there.

*New Scientist*, 5 November 1987.

### Peral mussel decline

Europe's freshwater pearl mussel *Margaritifera margaritifera* has declined markedly in recent years, according to a report from the European Economic Community. The animals require extremely clean water and they have virtually disappeared from Germany, Spain, France and Luxembourg because of overfishing and pollution. The species's continued existence is under threat and the decline also indicates that the health of Europe's rivers is poor. The report calls for a survey to draw up a register of surviving populations of pearl mussels; good numbers are at present known only in Scotland and east Lapland. At its July 1987 session the European Parliament adopted a resolution that the habitats of the pearl mussel must be designated as protected sites.

*Marine Pollution Bulletin*, 18, 10; *Naturopa newsletter-nature*, 87–8.

*Briefly*

## UK protects more species

The wild cat, the dormouse and the pine marten will receive full protection in the UK as a result of the first 5-year review of the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981. It will now be an offence to injure, kill or take any of these animals from the wild. A total of 48 species of animals and 31 species of plant will receive additional protection, bringing the total number of species now protected to 177.

*DOE Press Release*, 30 November 1987.

### UK's nature reserves to be sold off?

The UK Environment Secretary, Mr Nicholas Ridley, has plans to privatize Britain's 240 national nature reserves, which are at present owned and managed by the Government's Nature Conservancy Council. The NCC is expected to resist this move and voluntary conservation bodies have already publicly condemned the idea. If the plan goes ahead it could lead to Britain breaking several international wildlife treaties.

*The Observer (London)*, 10 January 1988.

### Wild orchids stolen in the UK

The year 1987 was a bad one for thefts of wild orchids in the UK. Despite the protection afforded by the Orchid Warden Scheme, and legislation under Section 8 of the Wildlife and Countryside Act, a significant number of rare plants are dug up by collectors each year. The year saw the loss of over 100 early purple orchids, green-winged orchids and greater butterfly orchids from sites in Gloucestershire, lady orchids and early spider orchids from Kent, and seed-pods of the lizard orchid (listed in the UK Vascular Plants Red Data Book) from Cambridgeshire.

*Plant Press*, 2 (available from the Conservation Association of Botanical Societies, 323 Norwood Road, London SE24 9AQ).

### Orchid smuggler charged

A company secretary was remanded on £7000 bail for six weeks at a Magistrates' Court in London, charged with contravening the Trade and Endangered Species Act by smuggling 24 orchid plants worth £2000 into

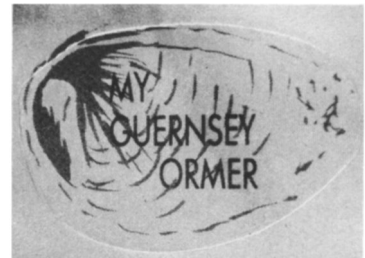
Heathrow Airport on 8 December. He was also charged with attempting to smuggle a jaguar skin.

*Nottingham Evening Post*, 11 December 1987.

### Pots of palms threaten wild stock

The recent appearance of palm seedlings for sale in British garden centres is leading to concern. Many seedlings are often crammed into each pot with no apparent respect for ultimate growth requirements—they are clearly intended to be 'throw-away' short-lived foliage plants. Evidence is accumulating to suggest that large-scale collection of palm seed, sometimes of threatened species, from the wild is supporting this trade. For example, seedlings of the Madagascar three-sided palm *Neodypsis decaryi* have become available recently and very large quantities of seed are being exported from Madagascar. Seed is not yet covered by the Convention on Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora, nor is this species on a CITES schedule.

*The Kew Magazine*, 4, 4.



Sticker produced for 'Adopt a Guernsey Ormer' Scheme.

### Adopt an ormer

The Societe Guernesaise has launched a sponsorship scheme to help stem the decline of the Channel Islands ormer *Haliotis tuberculata*. Attempts to protect it were made as early as 1876 when Guernsey's Royal Court restricted harvesting of the mollusc for food. The new scheme—in which benefactors will be invited to 'adopt' an ormer for 10 p—is intended to raise money for a marine conservation area near Port Saumarez in Guernsey.

*The Guardian (Manchester)*, 4 January 1988.

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## Bearded vulture back in Alps

The bearded vulture *Gypaetus barbatus* is back in the European Alps for the first time this century. A reintroduction programme in the Austrian Alps, where the bird's prey and habitat still survive, has resulted in five vultures now living wild in the area. Unfledged young, three in 1986 and two in 1987, were reared in an artificial nest and fed by project workers until they learned to fend for themselves.

*New Scientist*, 14 January 1988.

## Lynx deaths—setback to projects

A female lynx *Felis lynx* introduced to the Vosges in France from Czechoslovakia, which gave birth to three cubs in August 1987—the first births since the reintroduction programme began in 1983—has been killed and it is presumed her cubs are dead. The lynx's severed radio-collar was found buried in woodland in October by researchers, and a formal enquiry has been set up led by local police. The most likely killer is a poacher wanting the animal's pelt; in Paris a lynx coat fetches £10,000–25,000 and although such a coat must carry a certificate of Russian or Czechoslovakian origin such documents are easily falsified. Only six lynxes now remain, but the project will continue and more animals will be introduced. Early in November another introduced female lynx was shot by a hunter in the canton of Neuchâtel, Switzerland. Switzerland now has about 50 lynx as a result of reintroductions, which began in the early 1970s. In both France and Switzerland the hunting community has opposed these projects.

*BBC Wildlife*, January 1988; *Cat News*, January 1988.

## Turkish wetland needs more help

One of Turkey's most important wetlands Camalti Tuzlasi needs more protection. Situated 26 km north-west of Izmir on the Mediterranean coast it covers 80 sq km and includes salt pans, lagoons, reedbeds and pasture. It is state-owned and hunting has not been allowed in the area since 1982; most of its 50 breeding bird species have been legally protected in Turkey since 1937, and since January 1987 sheep-

grazing has been forbidden. The threats that remain include drainage for the extension of salt extraction (undertaken by the Monopolies Department of the Ministry of Customs and Monopolies), illegal hunting and disturbance, and destruction of the breeding colonies by fishermen. The Turkish Government should declare Camalti Tuzlasi a protected area and manage it to protect the habitat and its breeding birds.

*World Birdwatch*, 9, 4.

## Audouin's gull gets helping hand

Two years of lobbying by conservationists for action to protect the Audouin's gull *Larus audouinii* colony on the Chafarinas Islands (see *Oryx*, 20, 161) finally convinced the Spanish authorities to start a conservation project in 1987. The main cause of concern has been the population increase of the gull's main competitor, the herring gull *L. argentatus michahelles*, which in 1985 resulted in an almost complete failure of the breeding colony. Culling of 950 adult herring gulls resulted in an increase in Audouin's gull's nests—2845 in 1987 compared with 1930 in 1986—and an estimated 1027 chicks fledged. The Instituto para la Conservación de la Naturaleza plans to repeat the culling.

*World Birdwatch*, 9, 4.

## Protected area treaty for Mediterranean

A treaty binding Mediterranean nations to establish 100 protected areas of conservation interest entered force at the end of 1987. The Treaty of Protected Areas in the Mediterranean has been ratified by nine countries and the European Community, and is being ratified by four more. The designated areas include important fisheries and monk seal and turtle sanctuaries.

*Marine Pollution Bulletin*, 18, 12.

## Freira's fate not sealed

The freira *Pterodroma madeira* bred successfully in Madeira, its only known home, for the first time in three years in 1987. It is one of the rarest seabirds in the world and a conservation effort has concentrated on excluding rats, which predate eggs and young, from the breeding area.

*World Birdwatch*, 9, 4.

## Births in introduced herds in Tunisia

The groups of 10 scimitar-horned oryx *Oryx dammah* and eight addax *Addax nasomaculatus* introduced into Bou-Hedma National Park, Tunisia, swelled their ranks in 1987 (see *Oryx*, 21, 249). On 6 July they were released from the 10-ha pre-release enclosure into the 15,000-ha Total Protection Zone. On 28 July a healthy male oryx calf was born. Two addax, a male and a female, were also born.

*BBC Wildlife*, January 1988.

## Africa

### Good and bad tidings from Sao Tomé and Príncipe

In 1987 an ICBP team visited Sao Tomé and Príncipe, two small islands in the Gulf of Guinea off Africa's west coast, in order to assess the status of the birds there, many of which were included in the African Bird Red Data Book. The last ornithological studies had been done in the early 1970s, just before the islands became independent from Portugal, and the habitats have changed since then. The survey revealed that the populations of most species were healthy, probably in a far better state than for many years due to the widespread abandonment of plantations, which has permitted regeneration of native vegetation, and the cessation of pesticide use. There is still cause for concern, however. The World Bank has recently made funds available for rehabilitation of some of the plantations and Portuguese settlers are returning.

*World Birdwatch*, 9, 4.

### Africa's threatened parks

An Action Strategy for Protected Areas in the Afrotropical Realm, recently completed by IUCN's Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas, lists 24 of Africa's national parks as threatened and suggests ways of saving them. One of the worst affected is Sudan's Dinder National Park. It was established in 1935 and has suffered a gradual loss of biological diversity caused by loss of wet-season dispersal area to settlement and agriculture in the Blue Nile region of the south, poaching and hunting, heavy domestic stock grazing, and lack of management.

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Five new stamps depicting medicinal herbs of Kenya. Further details are available from Crown Agents Stamp Company Ltd, Old Inn House, 2 Carshalton Road, Sutton, Surrey SM1 4RN.

Dinder's problems are so severe that its viability as a conservation area is being lost and its existence in the 21st century is in doubt. *IUCN Bulletin*, 18, 7-9.

## Zimbabwe's cheetahs disliked by farmers

As a result of his national survey of cheetah *Acinonyx jubatus* for Zimbabwe's National Parks Board, Viv Wilson came to the reluctant conclusion that licensed hunting for the animal will have to be permitted in some areas. The cheetah is considered a problem by 80 per cent of farmers in the country and many of them see no benefit from allowing it to remain on their land. Permitting individuals to be killed by paying licensed hunters may change their attitude. Some farmers are already illegally killing cheetahs and burying the carcasses to avoid detection. There are an estimated 470 cheetahs left in Zimbabwe and Wilson recommends that a strict cheetah reserve be set up and a breeding centre established. *Cat News*, 8.

Briefly

## Tsetse trials triumph

A field trial using pieces of dark-coloured cloth, which were impregnated with 'cattle-odour' as well as with a strong insecticide, to attract and kill tsetse flies, has been in operation over 600 sq km in Zimbabwe (see *Oryx*, 19, 206). The researchers, from the University of Bristol and the Department of Veterinary Services in Zimbabwe, have reported that tsetse flies were virtually wiped out by placing four targets per sq km in the test area. They now plan to continue field trials over a larger area of 2000 sq km. *New Scientist*, 12 November 1987.

## Botswana's visitors allowed to hunt hunting dogs

The endangered African hunting dog *Lycaon pictus* has been placed on the hunting quota for non-residents in Botswana and it is reported that clients of safari companies have so far shot about 10 animals. Residents have always been allowed to kill the dogs in defence of their livestock, but the new dispensation to visiting hunters seems

to be aimed only at increasing revenue because there is no livestock in the areas where safari companies operate. It is unusual to see the species south of Maun now and it seems to be in trouble even in the Kalahari. Nothing is known about the status of the hunting dog in northern Botswana and data on which to base hunting quotas seem not to be available. *Quagga*, 19.

## Hope for hornbill

The southern ground hornbill *Bucorvus leadbeateri* has disappeared from much of its former range in the Transvaal, Natal and eastern Cape Province. Although the birds need extensive areas for their territories, habitat alteration has played only a small part in their disappearance; the major factors responsible are shooting and poisoning. Fortunately the bird is revered by many native communities and so thrives in those parts of the Transkei, Venda and the homelands where the habitat is still good enough. Efforts have started to re-establish ground hornbills in parts of their former range; second chicks, which rarely survive, are being taken for breeding at the National Zoological Gardens in Pretoria and eventually it is hoped that this captive population will supply recruits for recolonization. *African Wildlife*, 41, 6.

## Shark nets killing dolphins

The shark nets that protect bathers off the beaches off Natal, South Africa, trap and kill dolphins and turtles, and the effect on bottlenosed dolphins *Tursiops aduncus* is particularly worrying according to Harry Richard, a Natal University zoologist. His studies suggest that there are fewer than 800-1000 bottlenosed dolphins left along Natal's coast and the mortality rate from the nets is greater than their reproductive rate. Natal Sharks Board, which is responsible for the nets, has appointed a full-time researcher to investigate the problems of dolphins and shark nets, and to find ways of preventing accidental capture. *Quagga*, 19.

## Betty's bay penguins protected

Until recently Africa's only breeding penguin, the jackass *Spheniscus demersus*, was confined to nesting only

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on offshore islands around the South African coast. The species had declined steadily over the past century, one reason being the limited number of breeding sites available. A few years ago a handful of birds began to breed at Stony Point, a small rocky peninsula at Betty's Bay in the Western Cape—South Africa's only mainland colony. The colony soon came under pressure—from disturbance by sightseers and predation by a leopard—so the residents of Betty's Bay asked for help. The Municipality made Stony Point a reserve while members of the Wildlife Society, Sea Fisheries Research Institute, SA Nature Foundation, Percy FitzPatrick Institute of African Ornithology, International Council for Bird Preservation and the Betty's Bay Branch of the Botanical Society designed a predator-and-people-proof fence and raised money for its construction.

*African Wildlife*, 41, 6.

## Removing an invader

It is possible, although onerous, to replace dense thickets of Port Jackson willow *Acacia saligna* with native vegetation, according to the results of a preliminary study. The plant is the most serious alien plant invader in South Africa's fynbos ecosystem. Felling and burning was found to be most effective as it destroys a large proportion of the species's seed bank in the soil, thus reducing the future threat of reinvasion. However, it needs to be followed by several years of herbicide application or hand-weeding if the native fynbos vegetation is to recolonize successfully.

*Veld and Flora*, 73, 3.

## Valuable addition to South African park

In buying Geelbek farm, the South African Nature Foundation has gained the first mainland territory for Langebaan Lagoon National Park, which previously consisted of four islands and the lagoon's southern waters. Geelbek, at the southern end of the lagoon, has extensive mudflats and reedbeds providing food and shelter for thousands of waterbirds. The park is a crucial wetland, a home for flamingos, pelicans, spoonbills, fish eagles, herons and many other species. The park was further enlarged after the conclusion of

an agreement between the National Parks Board and the Oude Post Syndicate (Pty) Ltd in which four properties of the syndicate, with a total area of 18.5 sq km, have been included in the park. This is the first occasion where land in private ownership has been included in a national park in South Africa by agreement with the owner rather than by purchase.

*Our Living World, Supplement to Weekend Argus*, 5 September 1987; *Quagga*, 19.

## Anglers help in conservation programme

South Africa's angling community is participating enthusiastically in a project to help conserve marine fish caught by rod and line. About 1500 anglers have tagged and released 15,500 fish in a programme run by the Oceanographic Research Institute to help piece together the life-cycles of different fish species, and to discover how heavily each species is being exploited. Many of the endemic fish pursued by recreational and commercial fishermen have suffered serious declines and information is needed to develop conservation measures for them.

*Our Living World, Supplement to Weekend Argus*, 5 September 1987.

## World's most southerly elephants protected

After many years of delay the South African Government has at last agreed to give the go-ahead to a campaign to save the Knysna elephants—the world's southernmost wild elephants. There are only three left—a bull, a cow and a calf—and it is proposed to fence a sanctuary area for them and to introduce three young elephants from another area to rebuild the herd.

*Our Living World, Supplement to Weekend Argus*, 5 September 1987.

## A quagga in 10 years?

Participants in the Quagga Experimental Breeding Programme, set up by the South African Museum, believe that it should be possible to produce a quagga *Equus quagga* in three generations—about 10 years. The quagga, which became extinct in 1883, was shown to be a subspecies of the plains (Burchell's) zebra *E. burchelli* when fragments of tissue collected from dead quagga

skins by Reinhold Rau at the museum yielded minute quantities of DNA. These were cloned and analysed by geneticist, Dr O. Ryder at the Zoological Society of San Diego, California, USA. Since the plains zebra is still abundant the main quagga gene pool is available. Eight zebras have been selected from 2500 in Etosha Game Reserve in South West Africa/Namibia for their resemblance to quaggas and they are being bred at the Cape Department of Nature and Environmental Conservation's Vrolijkheid Station at Robertson.

*African Wildlife*, 41, 5.

## End of a reserve

Namibia's Caprivi Game Reserve has been taken over by the military and is in the process of being de-gazetted. It was established in 1963 and its 5300 sq km of savanna bushland dissected by the Okavango River were inhabited by lechwe, hippopotamus, and sable and roan antelopes.

*CNPPA Newsletter*, 41.

## Blue swallow reserve

The South African Department of Environmental Affairs has announced that it will set aside 470 ha of grassland on Kaapsehoop plateau to protect blue swallow *Hirundo atrocaerulea* habitat. The action follows a survey by the Endangered Wildlife Trust, which discovered that the species remained only in 50 breeding sites, most in the Transvaal, and several on the Kaapsehoop plateau. The area was scheduled for afforestation with pine, but the Transvaal Nature Conservation Division and the Trust appealed to the Director-General of Environment Affairs to set aside the plateau as a nature reserve.

*Quagga*, 18.

## Rubbing posts for rhinos

When rhinos began to use electricity poles in the Sabie-Sand Game Reserve in South Africa as rubbing posts, dislodging them and causing power failures, Escom (the country's electricity company) had to find a solution. The poles have been replaced and surrounded by large boulders, while sections of the damaged poles have been planted close by for the rhinos to use to rid themselves of parasites and itches.

*Quagga*, 18.

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### Move to protect baboon spiders

The practice of keeping baboon spiders as pets in Transvaal, South Africa, was threatening their survival in certain areas, so the province's Nature Conservation Division has added all species of the genera *Ceratogyrus*, *Harpactira* and *Pterinochilus* to Appendix 7 of the Ordinance on Nature Conservation. This means that no one may collect, capture, keep, sell, give or receive these spiders. They may not be transported within or exported from the Transvaal without a permit. *Quagga*, 18.

### Sanctuary needed for fish in Lesotho

A relict and rare cyprinid fish, *Oreodaimon quathlambae*, is known only from six mountain streams in Lesotho. It was first described in 1938 and then believed extinct until rediscovered in 1970. The Lesotho Highlands Water Scheme now presents a threat to the species. The Mohale Dam will flood parts of the habitat in two streams, and the water scheme itself will increase human access to the area. It is feared that this will lead to pressure for stocking with trout, which would prey on the fish. More research is needed on this little-known cyprinid, and sanctuary streams should be identified and their catchments managed to prevent siltation arising from overgrazing. *Quagga*, 18.

### Asia (excluding Indo-Malaya)

#### Pliight of sand cats in Israel

The sand cat *Felis margarita*—one of the world's rarest cat species—is found in Israel only in the sands of the northern Arava. The Israel population is declining as more of the sands are cultivated and will doubtless suffer from the effects of the planned Voice of America antenna in the Arava. *The UK Society for the Protection of Nature in Israel Newsletter*, Autumn 1987.

#### Bleak future for Asian cheetah

The future looks bleak for the last survivors of the Asiatic cheetah *Acinonyx* *Briefly*

*jubatus venaticus* in Iran and Soviet Turkmenistan. Ten years ago Iran was said to have about 200 in reserves and 50 outside, but in recent years protection has collapsed, reserves have been invaded by graziers, and gazelles, the main cheetah prey, have been heavily poached. A biologist in Teheran University plans to survey the current status. In Turkmenia the remaining animals in the wild will not survive according to Algirdas Knystautas, and he recommends that reintroducing the African cheetah is the only way to re-establish the population there. He believes that the African and Asian subspecies, if they are distinct at all, are already mixed in the wild population in Turkmenia as a result of escapes in the past when African cheetahs were imported for hunting. The last known cheetahs in India were three shot in 1947; in Oman a fresh skin was brought into Muscat in 1978, but there have been no further reports of any in the wild. *Cat News*, 8.

#### Dugongs thrive in Gulf despite oil

Despite heavy oil spills and the effects of the Iran–Iraq war, the population of dugongs *Dugong dugon* in the Persian Gulf has not been wiped out as was feared, according to the Saudi Meteorological and Environmental Agency. After the large 1983 oil spill 38 dugongs were found dead on shore and the Gulf's population was estimated at about 50. As a result of a subsequent study the population was estimated at 6400—and an additional 800 are believed to be living in the Red Sea. *Los Angeles Times*, 26 December 1987.

#### Panda poachers in prison

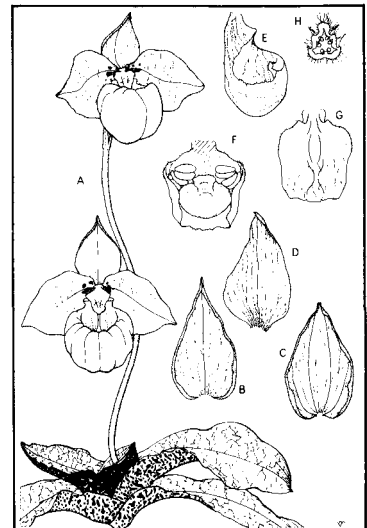
Twenty-six men were sent to prison in December 1987 for killing and skinning pandas in Sichuan province, China. The sentences ranged from three years to life. The men killed six pandas and tried to smuggle their skins abroad; they also skinned 16 pandas that had starved to death because of a bamboo shortage. (These recent sentences may reflect a tightening up of the law in China—see next item. Editor.) *Los Angeles Times*, 25 December 1987.

### China's wildlife trade legislation inadequate

China's legislation is inadequate to protect the country's wildlife and, although China is a party to CITES, there is a flourishing international trade in meat and parts of endangered species out of China. The most powerful law allows only 'short periods of arrest, or a fine, or two years' or less imprisonment' for those disobeying hunting regulations, and is only applicable if the culprit is caught actually killing the animal. Holding rare or endangered species with a view to killing them, or trading in furs from rare or endangered species, are not offences. A new law, which would make buying and selling of furs and parts of endangered species illegal, has been drafted and circulated to provincial authorities for review. It is hoped that it will be enacted in mid-1988. *Cat News*, 8.

### New orchid at risk already

An orchid from China, *Paphiopedilum malipoense*, described as recently as 1984, is in danger of extinction in the wild. Thousands have been exported illegally to Japan, USA, Australia and Europe in the last two years. Its range is restricted to limestone outcrops at 1300–1600 m and it was first collected at Malipo in south-east Yunnan. *The Kew Magazine*, 4, 4.



*Paphiopedilum malipoense* habit and flower and sectional views (By kind permission of the Royal Botanic Garden, Kew).



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Japanese telephone cards—a percentage of their purchase price goes towards the protection of threatened plants.

## Telephone calls help plants

Japan's flora consists of 4000 described species, including many endemics, and many are threatened. However, there is no Plant Red Data Book for the country and WWF—Japan is seeking to remedy this. Its fund-raising efforts for the project include selling cards for use in public telephone boxes. Each card features a Red Data plant and costs ¥800, of which ¥500 buys telephone time while the rest is donated to the plant campaign.

## Marsh park for Japan

The largest marshland in Japan was designated as the country's 28th national park in July 1987. It has a total area of 269 sq km; 210 sq km is marshland and this is surrounded by a protective zone encompassing one city, two towns and a village. Kushiro Marshland stretches to the north of Kushiro City in Hokkaido and is the home of Japanese cranes and other rare species including Ito, a large freshwater fish once believed extinct, northern salamanders and Ezokaojiro dragonflies. *CNPPA Newsletter*, 41.

## Butterfly business booms—but at what cost?

Butterflies are big business in Taiwan. The butterfly industry employs 10,000 collectors and 10,000 factory workers to make novelties, using 500 million butterflies each year, most of them wild-caught. The latest line in butterfly products is elaborate pictures made from the wings; skilled workers can

make faithful reproductions of old masters. No one knows how such high levels of exploitation may be affecting populations but, as Taiwan's forests disappear, butterfly habitats become increasingly fragmented and collectors could wipe out entire colonies. Dr Mark Collins of the IUCN Conservation Monitoring Unit in Cambridge, UK, says that unless something is done to curb habitat loss and to protect vulnerable species, Taiwan may lose not only its butterflies, but also an industry that provides a living for thousands of people.

*Sunday Times (London)*, 22 November 1987.

## Indo-Malaya

### Gandhi helps save whale

While on holiday in the Lakshadweep Islands in the Arabian Sea in December, India's Prime Minister, Rajiv Gandhi, spotted a whale caught on a reef. He dived into the sea and with local people pushed the whale to safety in deep water.

*Washington Times*, 31 December 1987.

## Rare civet reappears

The rare Malabar civet *Viverra civettina* has been rediscovered by G. U. Kurup of the Zoological Survey of India about 60 km east of Calicut on the south-west coast. The last specimen may have been collected in 1928, but there is some uncertainty and it is possible that the species had not been seen at all this century.

*IUCN Bulletin*, 18, 7–9.

## Houbara bustards die in transit

Thirty-eight Houbara bustards *Chlamydotis undulata* starved to death and 30 more were injured after being crammed into cages by smugglers and shipped from Pakistan to the Persian Gulf, according to a spokesman for the Punjab Wildlife Department. Altogether 158 of the birds, an endangered species, which is the traditional hunting prey of the Arab princes, were flown to Dubai as personal baggage.

*The Globe and Mail*, 16 November 1987.

Houbara bustard *Chlamydotis undulata* (Mark Boulton/ICCE).



*Oryx Vol 22 No 2, April 1988*

# Briefly . . .

## Dudhwa needs management plan

Dudhwa National Park in Uttar Pradesh state in India urgently needs a management plan to ease tiger/human conflict, according to Billy Arjan Singh. More than 150 people have been killed by tigers since the park was established. The park, which covers 490 sq km, is under pressure from an increasing human population on its borders. Old timber roads are used in the illicit exploitation of timber, and poaching is rife. Tigers have been destroyed by poison, electrocution, trapping, shooting and bombs. In addition, their main prey, swamp deer *Cervus duvauceli*, have declined sharply. *Cat News*, 8.

## Snow leopard conservation

The Indian Government has initiated major snow leopard conservation projects in three parks in the state of Jammu and Kashmir. The human inhabitants of the parks will not be shifted as has been done in other conservation programmes, but will be actively involved in the projects. The parks involved are Hemis and Karakoram, in Ladakh on the north side of the Himalayas, and Kishtwar on the southern slopes.

*Snow Line*, 13.

## Wildlife dealers arrested in Laos

Two Thai wildlife dealers arrested in Laos on 27 August 1987 for forging export permits for wildlife were sentenced to two and three years imprisonment, and fined 3M baht (US \$112,400) and 1.2M baht. The forged export permit listed 12 species including 10 clouded leopard *Neofelis nebulosa*. Laos imposed a ban on trade in all species of wildlife on 28 October 1986.

*Traffic Bulletin*, 9, 2/3.

## Malaysia cracks down on environmentalists

On 27 October 1987 the Malaysian Government shut down three national newspapers and ordered the illegal arrests of 103 journalists, activists and political opponents under the Internal Security Act 1960. Among them were three Friends of the Earth Malaysia's most senior representatives. One of

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Four new stamps from Malaysia depicting protected wildlife. These are the third part of a series of stamps. Further details are available from Crown Agents Stamp Company Ltd, Old Inn House, 2 Carshalton Road, Sutton Surrey SM1 4RN.

these, Harrison Ngau, a Kayan, who is co-ordinator of the Sarawak office, is a principal supporter of the anti-logging campaign in which Kenyah, Kayan and Penan tribespeople set up and guarded road-blocks to prevent their homelands being logged. On 29 October local and military police in Sarawak dismantled 12 road-blocks in the region of the upper Baram River and arrested 42 tribespeople. This is the first time that the state has dared to move against local people trying to protect their environment from the ravages of commercial logging—much of which is personally controlled by state ministers. The Sarawak Environment and Tourism Minister, Datuk Amar James Wong, for example, personally holds 100,000 ha of timber concessions in the Penan area, and says that he can see no conflict between his environmental portfolio and his logging interests. Friends of the Earth International, Survival International and other environmental and human rights groups mounted a vigorous campaign to try to gain release for those illegally arrested. Many of the detainees have now been released or sentenced to periods of detention or restriction. *World Rainforest Report*, 9; *BBC Wildlife*, December 1987; *Friends of the Earth Press Release*, 8 January 1988.

## Palms on the edge

Several palms in Peninsular Malaysia are on the verge of extinction. Of 195 indigenous species only 10 are not threatened, and most of the 23 considered to be endangered have not been seen for many years. Many of the palms are of economic importance, but few are cultivated; rattans, for example, are gathered entirely from the forest. One rattan, *Calamus endauensis*, found only in the Sungai Jasin valley of Endau-Rompin, is known from one sterile clump and its known habitat has been logged. A 2-year project on Malaysian palms was started in 1987 and it is hoped that field surveys will locate some of the endangered species and discover their geographical range to be greater than is currently known. *Malayan Naturalist*, 41, 1.

## Cloves threaten island

The entire island of Simeulue off the coast of Sumatra is being rapidly transformed into a cloves plantation. The island has a unique insect fauna and most of the endemic species that are dependent on the primary forest are likely to become extinct within 10 years.

Jason Weintraub, *Sinabaug, Simeulue*, 21 November 1987.



# Briefly . . .

## Deaths of Sumatran rhinos

Six Sumatran rhinoceros *Dicerorhinus sumatrensis* died in 1987 in Sabah, Malaysia. In March one was captured alive in a pit trap by Sabah Rhinoceros and Wildlife Conservation Committee workers, but it later died. The Committee was ordered to submit a report on how it died. Poachers killed five more in eastern Sabah in April. The total rhino population in Sabah was estimated at about 20 animals before these six deaths were reported. *Malayan Naturalist*, **41**, 1.

## Rothschild's mynah goes home

The wild population of Rothschild's mynah *Leucopsar rothschildi*—down to fewer than 100—may soon be augmented by reintroduced birds. The ICBP initiated a conservation programme for the species in 1982 and has since co-ordinated it in conjunction with the Indonesian Forest Department. Phases 1 and 2, which involved studies of the wild population and of the feasibility of releasing captive-bred birds, and habitat improvement and public awareness programmes, are complete. Phase 3 has just begun with two pairs of mynahs from the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust being sent to Indonesia in November 1987. They will be joined at Surabaya Zoo by 18 more pairs from North American zoos where they will be bred and their offspring released in Bali. *Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust*, December 1987.

## Poisoned bay—deadlock

Calancan Bay in the Philippines once teemed with fish and provided livelihoods for 20,000 fishermen and their families. Since the Canadian company Marcopper Mining Corporation began to dump tailings from its copper mines into the bay in 1975, things have changed. Coral reefs are buried and the water is poisoned; fish and other marine species have declined drastically. The company has ignored protests from residents and orders from the National Pollution Control Commission to stop dumping. After 13 public hearings the issue still has not been resolved, the NPCC has been abolished following reorganization of the Department of Environment and Natural Resources,

and the dumping continues. In addition it appears that the company is now under government control (because ex-President Marcos owned a majority of shares) and so cannot be sued for pollution by the fishermen. *Asia-Pacific People's Environment Network*, 25 November 1987.

## North America

### New hope for eskimo curlew

The eskimo curlew *Numenius borealis* was believed by some people to be extinct or very nearly so. But in the past few years there have been several observations of the species on migration in the central and southern US and in several parts of Canada. In May 1987 Canadian Wildlife Service biologists found a pair in the Canadian Arctic, possibly nesting. Now shorebird specialists from the US and Canada are making plans to recover the species from the brink of extinction. *Endangered Species Technical Bulletin*, **XII**, 8.

### US lists seven plants

The US added seven plant taxa to its list of endangered and threatened plants in June 1987. The elfin tree fern *Cyathea dryopteroides* and Cook's holly *Ilex cookii* are both rare in the Central Cordillera of Puerto Rico, and their fragile mountain habitat is threatened by road building and military training exercises. Running buffalo clover *Trifolium stoloniferum* once occurred in seven states, but now only four individuals are known, at one site in West Virginia. The landowner is cooperating in its protection and it is being propagated for reintroduction. Only three populations of Jesup's milk-vetch *Astragalus robbinsii* var. *jesupi* exist, all on the banks of the Connecticut River in Vermont and New Hampshire. The Sacramento Mountains thistle *Cirsium vinaceum* grows on steep calcium carbonate deposits next to springs in the Sacramento Mountains, New Mexico. Its 20 populations are vulnerable to developments that would reduce surface water, and to trampling by livestock. The rough-leaved loosestrife *Lysimachia asperulaefolia* survives only in the coastal plain and sandhills of North

Carolina, where its fire-maintained habitat is at risk from development. *Geocarpon minimum*, the only species of its genus, is a small succulent annual with only five vigorous populations left in open habitats in Arkansas and Missouri. *Endangered Species Technical Bulletin*, **XII**, 7.

### Five animals listed

In June 1987 five animal taxa were added to the US list of endangered and threatened species. The flattened musk turtle *Stemotherus depressus* is endemic to the Black Warrior River system in Alabama, where collectors, disease and habitat degradation threaten it. The Alabama red-bellied turtle *Pseudemys alabamensis* now nests regularly only on one island in the Tensaw River, where it suffers from egg-predation by fish crows *Corvus ossifragus* and disturbance by people. It is also caught for food and the pet trade. The Mount Graham red squirrel *Tamiasciurus hudsonicus grahamensis*, down to 265 individuals, is found only in Coronado National Forest in Arizona, where its habitat may face additional losses from logging, recreation and construction of an astrophysical facility. The Florida scrub jay *Aphelocoma c. coerulescens* is found only in central peninsular Florida, where its scrub habitat is disappearing under residential development. The blackside dace *Phoxinus cumberlandensis* is a small, brightly coloured fish, which lives in streams in the upper Cumberland River basin in Kentucky and Tennessee. Its range has contracted due to siltation and other water quality problems. *Endangered Species Technical Bulletin*, **XII**, 7.

### No hunting of bighorn herd

The 100-strong herd of bighorn sheep *Ovis canadensis* in the Lostine Range, Oregon, USA, was reduced to 33 in a few weeks at the end of 1986, and the hunting season, which was established in 1978 for six hunters who won bighorn permits in an annual draw, was called off for 1987. It is suspected that the deaths were caused by bacterial pneumonia spread by domestic sheep on the bighorn's summer range, Eagle Cap Wilderness Area. *Audubon*, November 1987.

# Briefly . . .

## Yew yields anti-cancer drug

Florida researcher workers have found that taxol, extracted from the bark of Pacific yew *Taxus* sp., which grows on the west coast of North America, most of it in British Columbia, is an effective anti-cancer drug. However, it takes 27,200 kg of yew bark (from 12,000 trees) to make just over 1 kg of taxol, and chemists at Florida State University are working to create a synthetic version.

*Vancouver Sun (Canada)*, 3 October 1987.

## No dam in the desert

The Arizona congressional delegation has dropped plans for Cliff Dam on the Verde River, a victory for conservationists who have fought the proposal for years. The dam would have interrupted one of the last free-flowing stretches of river in the Sonoran Desert and flooded nesting habitat for the only known population of desert-nesting bald eagles.

*Audubon*, September 1987.

## Eagle killers captured

A major undercover investigation by the US Fish and Wildlife Service in Gallup, New Mexico, ended in October 1987 with the anticipated arrest of 17 people and the filing of charges against 24 others for the illegal sale of eagles and other protected birds. More than 600 protected birds of 50 species had been killed in 18 months by a poaching network in nine western and southern states. Their parts had been made into replicas of Indian artefacts, which were bought by commercial dealers and collectors. Ultimately more than 50 people in five states are expected to be charged with violations of wildlife laws as a result of the investigation. Gallup is one of the country's largest trading areas for Indian souvenirs and artefacts. *Department of the Interior News Release*, 21 October 1987.

## Red-cockaded woodpeckers—victims of developers

In 1985 two Florida land developers killed two red-cockaded woodpeckers *Picoides borealis*, a federally protected endangered species, and ordered employees to fell any trees with cavities in a 6-sq-km woodland near Ocala,

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which they wanted to develop. Later that year they agreed to fund a survey of red-cockaded woodpeckers on the land and when environmental consultants found none, they were given permission to go ahead. After a former employee told the Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission what had happened, the two men were charged with conspiracy, and harassing and killing red-cockaded woodpeckers. At the trial on 15 September 1987, the defendants pleaded guilty and were given suspended prison sentences, and put on two years' probation. The President of the Development and Construction Corporation of America Inc., in lieu of paying a fine, agreed to donate \$300,000 to the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, earmarked for red-cockaded woodpecker recovery projects.

*Audubon*, September 1987.

## Setback for Hawaiian crow

One of the nine Hawaiian crows *Corvus hawaiiensis* at the Olinda Endangered Species Breeding facility on the island of Maui, died from egg impaction in the oviduct in June 1987. It was the only one of its species at the facility to lay eggs in 1987. It is estimated that fewer than 18 individuals of this species remain. *Endangered Species Technical Bulletin*, XII, 7.

## Central America

### Mexico's new reserve

Mexico has designated 4860 sq km of forests and wetlands in the south-east of the country as a Biosphere Reserve. Known as Sian Ka'an, it includes 2000 sq km of lagoons, reefs and bays, 1500 sq km of forest and 1780 sq km of mangrove and other swamps. *Los Angeles Times*, 28 September 1987.

### Citrus project shelved—a park instead?

Coca-Cola Foods announced on 25 September 1987 that it was shelving temporarily its proposed citrus project in Belize (see *Oryx*, 21, 254). The reasons given were unfavourable economic conditions and the failure to secure political risk insurance. At the same

time the company announced that it was donating 162 sq km of forest to Belize Audubon Society and Massachusetts Audubon Society for a reserve, pending approval of the Belize Government, along with \$50,000 to help launch a fund-raising drive for managing the reserve and securing additional land. Massachusetts Audubon Society also wishes to buy a further 450 sq km from a large Belizean landowner to add to the donated land to form a larger national park.

*Belize Audubon Society*, 6 January 1988.

## South America

### Three new parks in Colombia

Colombia has established three new national parks totalling 6800 sq km, increasing its total land area under park status by 10 per cent. The new parks are: Cahuinari, 5750 sq km of Amazonian forest; Tatamá, 519 sq km of Andean forest and headwaters; and Utria, 540 sq km of tropical forest, coastal wetlands, shoreline and coral reefs on the Pacific coast, including Ensenada de Utria, a special nursery area for humpback whales *Megaptera novaeangliae*.

*The Nature Conservancy News*, Winter 1988.

### Brazil makes killing or harassing cetaceans illegal

On 18 December 1987 Brazil's President, Jose Sarney, signed a law making any killing or intentional harassment of cetaceans strictly forbidden in Brazilian waters. It provides for heavy penalties for infringement—2–5 years in prison, fines and seizure of any ship involved.

*Fundacao Brasileira para a Conservacao da Natureza*, 24 December 1987.

### Rediscovery of antwren

A pair of black-hooded antwrens *Myrmotherula erythronotos* was discovered in a remnant forest—part of the once extensive Atlantic forests—in Rio de Janeiro State, Brazil in September 1987. The last reliable record of this tiny bird is from the second half of the last century.

*World Birdwatch*, 9, 4.

# Briefly . . .

## Chacoan peccary project

The Chacoan peccary *Catagonus wagneri* is the focus of a new conservation project funded by Wildlife Conservation International—a Division of the New York Zoological Society. It was discovered in the wild only in 1972, having previously been known only from fossils, but now it appears to be on its way to extinction due to habitat destruction and hunting. Zoologist Andrew Taber is carrying out the field project in the Chaco Boreal region of Paraguay, Bolivia and Argentina, and will develop a conservation plan for the species and try to excite public interest in the ecology and conservation of the entire Chaco Basin area.

*Wildlife Conservation International News*, September/October 1987.

## Australia/Antarctica

### Problems in Australia's parks

Australia's national parks are suffering badly from lack of funds and staff. Although the area with national park status has almost doubled in the last 10 years—from 12 million to 22 million ha—and spending on the parks has increased—from A\$29 million to A\$186 million in the same period—many parks exist in name only. Problems include containing introduced animals and plants and damage by increasing numbers of tourists in four-wheel drive vehicles. The major concern in Kakadu National Park, for example, is sensitive mimosa *Mimosa pigra*, an introduced South American species, which is penetrating the park, turning the wetlands into shrubby heath; four men work full-time controlling mimosa. In New South Wales vast stretches of the foreshore are becoming impenetrable thickets of bitou bush *Chrysanthemoides monnifera*; the bush was introduced from South Africa from 1950 to 1970 to stabilize sand dunes and is now choking out native vegetation. *Times on Sunday (Australia)*, 13 December 1987.

### Public opinion turns against shooting in Australia

The Government of New South Wales, Australia, conducted an official enquiry into wildfowl shooting after a poll by the organization Animal Liberation showed that 66 per cent of the public

opposed the activity. For every two million ducks killed each hunting season in Australia, 200,000–600,000 more are fatally wounded. Another concern is the damage caused by lead shot. In Bool Lagoon, South Australia, which was open to hunters for only six hours in 1986, 100 endangered magpie geese *Anseranas semipalmata* died as a result of swallowing lead shot. Furthermore, many protected species are shot in addition to the eight legal species. In order to try to deal with this problem all new shooters in Victoria after 1989 will be required to sit a 10-minute identification test before being issued with a licence, and this will apply to all hunters by 1991. Although public opinion is turning against shooting, the hunters remain a powerful lobby and bring the government an income of A\$3 million a year. Animal Liberation says tourism could bring in even more income, citing the A\$12 million a year paid by spectators of the fairy penguins on Victoria's Penguin Island. *BBC Wildlife*, December 1987.

### Election results raise hope for Queensland's forests

The Australian federal elections in 1987 resulted in a victory for the Labour Party, which was attributed to the environmental vote. The new Government immediately promised to nominate the moist tropical forest in the Daintree area of Queensland for World Heritage listing. The Queensland Government has indicated that it will challenge this in the Australian High Court. On 14 August 1987 the Government banned further use of rainforest timber in furniture for the new Parliament House under construction. *World Rainforest Report*, 9.

### Dugong sanctuary

The Torres Strait Protected Zone Authority has declared a sanctuary for dugongs *Dugong dugon* approximately 800 sq nautical miles, north-west of Cape York, Queensland, Australia. *Wildlife Australia*, 24, 2.

### Too many tourists at Monkey Mia

Monkey Mia in Shark Bay, Western Australia, is suffering from increasing tourist pressure, and planned commercial developments are leading to calls

for the Shark Bay region to be declared a national park. It is perhaps the only place in the world where visitors can hand-feed and swim among wild dolphins, but increasing numbers of tourists are damaging the desert habitat and the rare stromatolite colony. *Wildlife Australia*, 24, 2.

### Farmers co-operate in penguin rescue plan

The yellow-eyed penguin *Megadyptes antipodes* is down to 1400–1800 breeding pairs in its native New Zealand and continues to decline because of predation by introduced stoats, ferrets and cats, and because of destruction of the coastal forests, which provide cool and sheltered nest sites. A campaign for a management programme has been launched to set aside reserves for the species and some coastal farmers are already co-operating. *International Wildlife*, November/December 1987.

### Rarest fly makes an appearance

*Exsul singularis*, a fly about 5 cm long with large black wings, is believed to be the rarest fly in the world. It had not been seen since 1941 until a 5-year-old boy found an adult near the Homer Tunnel in southern New Zealand recently. Virtually nothing is known about it and no larva has ever been found. *New Scientist*, 14 January 1988.

### News from Chatham Island

In New Zealand, Chatham Island black robins *Petroica traversi* are doing well; about 40 birds survived the 1987 winter and there is a record 14 breeding pairs. A radio-telemetry study on the Chatham island taiko *Pterodroma magentae* led to the discovery of the first breeding burrow on a small stack of the main island; it is suspected that there is no proper colony—just scattered individuals. *World Birdwatch*, 9, 4.

### Oceania

#### South Pacific convention soon to be in force

The Convention for the Protection of the Natural Resources and Environment of the South Pacific Region

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(SPREP Convention), which was approved in November 1986, needs to be signed and ratified by 10 countries before it comes into force. So far it has 10 signatories and two ratifications. Its two protocols concern prevention of pollution by dumping and regional co-operation in combating pollution emergencies.

*Environment Newsletter*, 9.

## PNG wildlife export ban

The Government of Papua New Guinea clamped down on all exports of vertebrate wildlife (except fish) in June 1987. For a long time PNG has permitted exports of vertebrate wildlife only to approved overseas institutions for legitimate scientific purposes. A recent investigation into one of the approved institutions, Kusatsu Tropicarium, Gunma Prefecture, Japan, revealed that it was a private commercial zoo. On 23 June the Secretary of PNG's Department of Environment and Conservation wrote to advise Kusatsu that its approved institution status was being withdrawn. Now PNG will continue its export ban until a review of all approved institutions is complete.

*Traffic Bulletin*, 9, 2/3.

## Will Rennell Island remain pristine?

A timber company, Foxwood Ltd, is pressing landowners on Rennell Island, about 160 km south of Guadalcanal in the Solomon Islands, to sign a logging contract. Apart from small areas of gardens the island, about 690 sq km, is covered with pristine forest and contains the largest lake in the Pacific (150 sq km). Of the 50 species of birds, 21 are endemic species or subspecies, and it is practically unexplored botanically. Because of its poor coral soil a logging operation would permanently devastate the island and would lead to disastrous ecological effects, including the extinction of species. The Third South Pacific National Parks and Reserves Conference held in Apia in 1985 recommended that priority should be given to establishing a protected area on Rennell Island. An IUCN report, Review of the Protected Areas System in Oceania, made the same recommendation. It has great potential for nature tourism.

*World Rainforest Report*, 9.

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## Meetings and courses

### International symposium on Mexico's biological diversity

The Instituto de Biología of the Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México has announced an International Symposium on the Biological Diversity of Mexico to be held in Mexico on 3–7 October 1988. Its purpose is to bring together scholars of various disciplines to: (1) evaluate the state of knowledge of biological diversity in Mexico; (2) identify priorities for study; and (3) provide a forum for exchange of ideas, experiences and future collaboration. The invited presentations will be published in book form in English and Spanish. For further details write to Biological Diversity, Apartado Postal 70-233, Universidad Nacional Autónoma de México, Delegación Coyoacán, México DF 04510, México. T. P. Ramamoorthy and Robert Bye are corresponding secretaries for the Organizing Committee.

### Breeding and conservation of endangered species

An intensive course run by the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust for zoo staff, students and others interested in conservation and captive breeding (of birds, mammals and reptiles), will be held from 30 July to 20 August 1988. Directors to include Dr Ian Swingland from the University of Kent and Dr Pat Morris from London University. The closing date for applications is 30 April. For future information contact the Summer School Co-ordinator, Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust, Trinity, Jersey, Channel Islands.

## People

A. R. Dupuy has retired after 20 years as Director of National Parks for Senegal.  
*CNPPA Newsletter*, 40.

Paul R. Ehrlich, Professor of Population Studies at Stanford University, California, USA, was awarded the WWF Gold Medal for 1987 in Lausanne on 5 November. The award was given 'in recognition of his achievements as a global spokesman

on population, extinction and environmental issues, and his contribution to the development of the science of conservation biology'.

*WWF News*, 50.

Sir Charles Fleming, eminent New Zealand scientist and conservationist, died on 11 September 1987. He served on the New Zealand National Parks Authority for a number of years before retiring 10 years ago.

*CNPPA Newsletter*, 40.

Gren Lucas, Chairman of IUCN's Species Survival Commission, was presented with the Bruno H. Schubert Prize on 26 June 1987 in Frankfurt, West Germany, for his outstanding contribution to his world-wide commitment to the protection of threatened animal and plant species.

Hemandra Mishra of Nepal was awarded the John Paul Getty Prize for wildlife conservation for 1987.

*CNPPA Newsletter*, 40.

Dr W. L. Nduku has been confirmed as the new Director of National Parks and Wild Life Management in Zimbabwe.

*CNPPA Newsletter*, 40.

Mamadou Sadio, a warden in Senegal's Niokolo-Koba National Park, was recently presented with the IUCN Valour Award for his exceptional work in anti-poaching.

*CNPPA Newsletter*, 40.

## Correction

### Hunting ban for African hunting dogs

On page 250 of the October 1987 issue of *Oryx*, under the title 'Kenya bans hunting of hunting dogs', we reported on an indefinite moratorium on the hunting of *Lycan pictus*. We made an unfortunate error, however, in attributing the ban to Kenya; it was imposed by the Directorate of Wildlife in Tanzania. We apologize to F.M.R. Lwezavia, Director of Wildlife, Ministry of Natural Resources and Tourism, Tanzania, and to John Fanshawe.