

Oryx 100% Fund

Only three grants were possible this quarter due to lack of money in the Fund. We hope for some replenishment.

£400 to Rwanda's Office of Tourism and National Parks to buy urgently needed equipment for the guards of the Volcanoes National Park, home of Rwanda's last mountain gorillas. Poaching and habitat erosion due to domestic-cattle grazing are serious threats, but a new Conservator has at last been appointed; he is ready and anxious to guard the gorillas and their habitat properly but lacks resources. This grant for equipment is little more than a token, and more is needed.

£250 to the Director of Uganda National Parks to buy bicycles for Uganda's Park Ranger Force.

£250 to the Director of Southern Sudan's Wildlife Department to provide bicycles for their Park Wardens.

These two grants for bicycles are made at the request of Dr John Owen, following another of his fact-finding African tours earlier this year. Park guards and wardens must obviously be mobile to do their jobs, and Land Rovers, planes and helicopters are valuable and highly efficient for anti-poaching operations, but the oil price increases have hit Africa like everywhere else, and will hit even harder in the future. Much useful guard work can be done on a bicycle, says John Owen, and sometimes it even has an advantage over faster (and noisier) transport in permitting closer observation of wildlife and vegetation, and signs of illegal activity, and causing less disturbance. Breakdowns too are usually less serious and more easily repaired. The Raleigh Company have promised to give the orders high priority. John Owen wants £500-worth of bicycles for each country. FPS have given half and the Frankfurt Zoological Society has promised the other half.

In addition to the 100% Fund grants, FPS has made two grants from its Endangered Species Fund:

£150 to the Tobago Branch of the Trinidad and Tobago Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals to reward local people for protecting turtles on nesting beaches;

£200 to Dr A. W. Diamond for marine turtle studies on Cousin Island, ICBP's Seychelles reserve.

In 1973 the Tobago SPCA paid \$50-rewards to 40 people for saving nesting green turtles and allowing them to return to the sea—then ran out of money. This year the Society received \$1288 in gifts for the purpose; but by mid-May money was running low, rewards had to be fewer, and twelve turtle carcasses were found on the beaches (compared with none after the start of the reward programme in 1973). Although it meant running into debt, rewards were resumed in June and had to be increased to \$75 owing to the rise in the cost of meat. The Fund is now \$1000 down—but many turtles have been saved. Gifts for these rewards can be accepted now and sent to Tobago to save next year's nesting turtles.

Reserves such as Cousin Island, which is primarily a bird reserve, are of great importance for marine turtles. Dr Diamond has managed to stop all turtle poaching on Cousin, and has started investigations into turtle rearing.

REPORTS ON PREVIOUS GRANTS

Rehabilitating Chimpanzees

Stella Brewer, aided by a grant from the Oryx 100% Fund, is trying to rehabilitate two confiscated male chimpanzees in the Niokolo Koba National Park in Senegal, where in 1972 she had released three chimps. In a letter last June describing progress she says that, to her great delight, after four months searching, she eventually found one of these three, a female, Tina, who had been living wild. Tina has now joined the two new males, William, to whom she is a mate, and the younger Pooh, for whom she is a mother. Stella Brewer writes, 'Tina teaches them what plants to feed on, what animals to avoid, which paths are best, how to build nests to sleep in at night, and—most important of all—how to be independent of me. They now wander miles from camp with her, whereas before Tina's arrival, they never went far without me'. One morning three wild adult chimps came past. William and Pooh followed them and stayed an hour with them before returning.

Iriomote Cat Project Success

The Fund early in 1973 gave £250 towards the study of the status and ecology of the newly discovered cat species on Iriomote Island, in northern Japan. This proved welcome seed money to the organiser of the project, Dr Paul Leyhausen, Chairman of the SSC Cat Group. With further funds, including a WWF grant, he was able to make the survey early this year with Professor Y. Imaizumi, Professor T. Takara, Professor Sadao Ikehara and Dr U. Theide, following up a preliminary investigation by two young Japanese scientists, T. Imaizumi and S. Yasuma. A report of their findings, including the discovery of a new pig species (or subspecies), is on page 523.

Taiwan Pheasants

Sheldon Severinghaus, to whom the Fund gave a grant for his investigation of the rare and endemic mikado and Swinhoe's pheasants in Taiwan, has not only found an area where both birds are relatively common, but has persuaded the Taiwan authorities to declare a 3680-ha. reserve for them—see page 521.

Wanted . . .

The Oryx 100% Fund grants are small, but these projects alone show how valuable they can be. The projects aided are very carefully selected and their effectiveness has been notable. The Fund is now very short of money—some good projects are having to be refused or shelved. If every FPS member would send even £1, we could make a number of good grants—especially if some members sent more! Every gift is doubled, being matched by an equivalent sum from FPS funds; none of it goes on administration. Please send your gift to the Hon. Secretary—soon.