

## News in Brief

### Pests Control Pests

More than a dozen insect pests in Canada are now successfully controlled by imported or translocated pests or parasites. This important statement on the success of biological control methods was made by Dr. Bryan P. Beirne, director of the Bellesville Research Institute in Ontario. But so far these methods have been tried out on only 1 per cent. of Canada's insect pests and no Canadian University has an adequate biological control department to develop the research.

### Pangolins and Alligators

A new fashion craze in the USA is for pangolin shoes, according to a report in the *Audubon Magazine*. The hides of two animals are needed to make one pair of ladies' shoes, and the selling price is \$85. The Society also reports that alligators, likewise demanded by fashion, are being poached so hard and so steadily that their survival is threatened in the southern states, despite the fact that all states have some protection for the alligator, and most of them a total prohibition on hunting.

### Protection for Hornbills

A resolution urging that all species of hornbills be removed from lists of game birds and that they should be totally protected throughout Asia was passed at the second biennial meeting of the Asian Section of the International Council for Bird Preservation in Hong Kong last autumn. Another resolution urged all governments to suppress the illegal import and export of birds of paradise and other rare birds and their skins by requiring certificates to show that the bird or skin had been legally taken in the country of origin.

### Cheetah Situation is Healthy

Reports that cheetahs in Kenya had declined alarmingly were fortunately not borne out by the interim report of a team employed by the East African Wildlife Society to look into this. They found that where other game had disappeared cheetah had gone too, but, says *Africana*, "the inferences are that the cheetah population of East Africa is healthy and there appears to be a high percentage of young animals among them".

### Plight of the Cougar

The cougar, the large cat also known as puma, panther, mountain lion and catamount, is barely holding its own in North America, according to a survey by Victor H. Calahane, assistant director of the New York State Museum, in *Audubon Magazine*. Only Florida and New Brunswick in the East still have a few cougars; in the western States there may be 4000, in Canada something over 3000. Yet federal predator control programmes are estimated to kill 7½ per

cent. of the total U.S. population of cougars. Florida and South Dakota give it complete protection, and bounty laws have recently been repealed in British Columbia, California, Oregon and Washington.

### **Russian Tigers Increase**

The number of Ussuri or Manchurian tigers in the Maritime Territory of the Soviet Far East has doubled from 40 to 80 as a result of the ban on hunting imposed 10 years ago.

### **Taking a Tortoise's Temperature**

During the Galapagos International Scientific Project early in 1964 Dr Stuart Mackay recorded the body temperatures of tortoises at Academy Bay, on Santa Cruz, by feeding them with minute (and harmless) transmitters buried in chunks of banana. These recorded the tortoises' body temperatures, which were transmitted by means of signals picked up by an ordinary transistor radio.

## **Reports and Journals**

**Annual Report of the International Council for Bird Preservation, British Section, 1964.** British Museum (Natural History), London, S.W.7, 3s.

Reports on several conferences are given in this useful summary of a year's work and progress in bird protection: the 8th conference of the European Continental section at Newcastle, Co. Down, in June; the conference on birds of prey at Caen in April; the general assembly of the Conseil International de la Chasse in the Hague in April, and an international symposium on migratory game birds in Florence in October. There are also reports from the International Wildfowl Research Bureau and the Advisory Committee on Oil Pollution of the Sea, under its new chairman Lord Shackleton. The former chairman and founder, Mr. James Callaghan, resigned due to pressure of work. A report on the effects of toxic chemicals on birds discusses developments, and particularly the Government's ban on aldrin, dieldrin and heptachlor.

**Project MAR: The Conservation and Management of Temperate Marshes, Bogs and other Wetlands.** Volume 1 (IUCN Publication No. 3), Proceedings of the MAR Conference organised by IUCN, ICBP and IWRB at Les Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer, November 12-16 1962. Volume 2 (IUCN Publication No. 5), List of European and North African Wetlands of International Importance. (Vol. 1, 35s, Vol. 2, 17s 6d, from IUCN, 19, Belgrave Square, London, S.W.1).

These two volumes, one stout, the other slim, are the monumental results of a notable enterprise, the conference arranged in the Camargue in November 1962 by the organising genius of Luc Hoffmann to make a start on the long process of conserving the world's wetlands, with their invaluable natural resources of wildfowl, fish and vegetation. Some 90 delegates came from 16 countries to listen to and discuss papers, and to launch a conservation scheme, of which the first fruits is contained in Volume 2. Here for the first time we have an internationally prepared scientific list of the wetlands that need to be conserved in one comparatively small quarter of the globe, Europe and North Africa. Sixteen areas are listed for Great Britain, eight in each of the two categories of importance. The first eight are Loch Leven in Kinross-shire, the Norfolk Broads, the coastal broads and marshes of Suffolk and Essex, the North Norfolk marshes, Abberton Reservoir in Essex, the Solway Firth, the Northumberland coast and the Wash with the East Anglian Fens.