

Briefly . . .

International

90 for World Heritage

The Maldivian Islands have become the 90th country to ratify the World Heritage Convention. *Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas, Members' Newsletter*, 35.

60,000 plants threatened

The second meeting of the IUCN/WWF Plant Advisory Group concluded that 60,000 plant species (more than one-fifth of the world's total) could become extinct by 2050 if present trends continue. *Threatened Plants Newsletter*, 16.

World Bank wildland policy

The World Bank has announced a new policy on the treatment of wilderness in development projects that could aid conservation. The Bank says that while further natural land and water areas will be converted for development, it will decline to finance projects in special pristine areas, favouring projects on already converted lands, and will introduce mitigatory measures in less important wildlands. *World Bank*, 1818 H. Street NW, Washington, DC 20433, USA.

Expedition competition

ICBP's Conservation Expedition Competition 1987 is open to ornithological teams planning to undertake conservation-based ornithological research abroad. ICBP will contribute up to \$1000 to each of the two best proposals. Closing date is 31 January 1987. Full details and entry forms are provided in a competition guide, which costs £3 from ICBP, 219c Huntingdon Road, Cambridge CB3 0DL, UK.

Japan returns Brazilian tamarins

Japan has agreed to return 10 golden-headed lion tamarins *Leontopithecus chrysomelas*, imported illegally in 1983, to the ownership of the Brazilian Government. In the past few years 25–50 per cent of the wild population of these endangered tamarins has been

taken illegally from Brazil and exported, with false documents, from Guyana and Bolivia to animal dealers in Belgium, France and Japan. It is estimated that animal dealers in Europe and Asia now hold about 50 golden-headed lion tamarins. Last November 16 in the possession of a Belgian animal dealer were returned to Brazil through the efforts of WWF-TRAFFIC (Belgium). *WWF News*, 41.

Europe and North Africa

Invertebrate charter

In March, a 'Charter for Invertebrates' was approved by the annual meeting of the Council of Europe's European Committee for the Conservation of Nature and Natural Resources in recognition of their vital environmental role and their need for protection. *naturupa-newsletter-nature*, 86–4.

Polar bears to be ranched?

The Norwegian Ministry of Environment has received an application for permission to establish a polar bear *Ursus maritimus* ranch on a small Arctic island. The 'ranch' would extend well out to sea, duplicating as far as possible the bears' natural habitat. The animals would be bred for their skins, which fetch £500–2000. *GNUS*, 127 (*Times*, 28 April 1986).

Reindeer—high levels of radioactivity

Radiation levels 80 times higher than normal were detected in wild Norwegian reindeer *Rangifer tarandus* after the disastrous accident at the Chernobyl nuclear power station. Reindeer are particularly susceptible to radioactivity since they graze on lichens, which extract their nutrients from the atmosphere. *GNUS*, 135 (*Guardian*, 20 June 1986).

Lynx numbers rise in Finland

Lynx *Felis lynx* numbers have trebled in Finland since 1979 when there were only 200; bear *Ursus arctos* numbers have remained unchanged, while wolf *Canis lupus* and wolverine *Gulo gulo*

numbers have decreased considerably. *GNUS*, 138.

Estonian protest

A group of Estonian scientists has written an open letter to the West calling for protests against Soviet plans to build a large oil terminal at Muuga near Tallinn. The scientists say it will be a major source of pollution to north Estonia and the Baltic. The area under threat includes Lake Peipsi, the main water source for Tallinn and the only area of the country not already polluted by oil-shale and phosphorite mining. *Nature (London)*, 321, 19 June 1986.

Project otter in Denmark

Denmark has launched a campaign, Project Otter, to spread knowledge about the conditions in which otters *Lutra lutra* live and about protecting the existing population, estimated at 200 individuals, and its habitat. *naturupa-newsletter-nature*, 86–6.

West Germany's new Environment Ministry

West Germany's Chancellor Kohl announced the creation of an Environment Ministry in June and named Herr Wallmann, Mayor of Frankfurt, as the first Minister for the Environment, Nature Protection and Reactor Safety. *Daily Telegraph*, 4 June 1986.

Chamois increasing in Poland

In the 30 years since the establishment of Tatra Mountains National Park in Poland the chamois *Rupicapra rupicapra* has increased in numbers and is spreading into new areas. The success is believed to be due to limiting sheep grazing and creating two high-altitude, closely protected areas where staff can dedicate more time to protecting and studying the animals. However, there is a need for more protection in the Western Tatras and for more information on chamois for visitors. *Parki Narodowe i Rezerwaty Przyrody*, 5, 1.

Bialowieza National Park needs enlarging

Out of 113 forest associations in the *Oryx Vol 20 No 4, October 1986*

Briefly . . .

52,000-ha (128,000-acre) Bialowieza Forest in Poland, only 40 occur in the National Park's 4747 ha (11,730 acres). In particular, the Park does not include the larger rivers and therefore many wetland animal and plant communities lie outside its boundary and receive little or no protection. Aleksander Sokolowski argues that the Park should be expanded to 18,000 ha (44,000 acres). *Parki Narodowe i Rezerваты Przyrody*, 4, 2.

Peat saved for geese

The UK's Forestry Commission has offered Scottish Malt Distillers Ltd an area of peat on one of its plantations on the island ofIslay. Brussels has now suspended legal proceedings against the British Government for allowing the Distillers to cut peat from Duich Moss where the Greenland white-fronted goose *Anser albifrons flavirostris* winters.

New Scientist, 5 June 1986.

New UK NNR

Britain's 68th National Nature Reserve was declared on 19 May: Creag Meagaidh in Inverness-shire covers 3948 ha (9755 acres), which span a range of habitats from lake-shore to mountain summit. The Nature Conservancy Council bought the land from a private forestry company in 1985 and one of its main aims is to achieve the regeneration of the natural highland woodland.

Four more NNRs in England

The Nature Conservancy Council announced four new national nature reserves (NNRs) in July: Ashford Hill in Hampshire, 49.54 acres (20.05 ha) of meadows in a wooded valley; Kitt's Grave (84.82 acres, 34.33 ha), a chalk downland extension to Martin Down NNR on the Hampshire/Wiltshire/Dorset border; Beacon Hill, 98.81 acres (39.99 ha) of ancient chalk grassland, with woodland, in Hampshire; and 14.82 acres (6.0 ha) of woodland at Little London Wood, to form an extension to Aston Rowant NNR.

Animal Affairs Centre

A number of philosophers, psychologists and veterinarians intend to establish a Centre for the Study of Animal Affairs at Liverpool University in the UK and are currently seeking financial backing. The Centre's network of members would devise joint research, pool knowledge and publish a newsletter. One research programme already suggested is on the relationship between species conservation and animal welfare. Details from Professor Stephen R. L. Clark, Department of Philosophy, PO Box 147, Liverpool L69 3BX, UK.

Afforestation damaging wildlife

In a report *Nature Conservation and Afforestation in Britain* published in June, the Nature Conservancy Council expresses its increased anxiety for the continuing damage to wildlife by new afforestation, particularly in such areas as the Flow country of Sutherland and Caithness. Afforestation has destroyed many irreplaceable wildlife habitats, some of international importance. The Council calls for a radical re-think of Britain's forestry policy and makes recommendations, including restricting automatic tax incentives and controlling planting more strictly.

The report is available from the Nature Conservancy Council, Northminster House, Peterborough PE1 1UA, UK, at £8.50 including postage.

New fish diseases

A report on fish of commercial value taken in French coastal waters, published by the French Marine Exploitation Research Institute, reveals hitherto unknown malformations and disorders. Metalloid chemicals and excessive concentrations of fluorine, calcium and magnesium were also found.

naturupa-newsletter-nature, 86-4.

ibex numbers in Switzerland

Alpine ibex *Capra ibex* numbers in Switzerland are rising—from 8070 in 1975, to 11,550 in 1984 and to 12,040 in 1985—according to the Hunting Statistics of the Swiss Federal Forestry Office. The most important populations live in the Canton Graubünden (5280) and the Canton Valais (3790). About 3900 are found either in the Swiss National Park or in 23 Federal Hunting

Reserves.

Dr Dollinger, Swiss Federal Veterinary Office.

Italian move against hunting

The Legale Italiana Protezione Uccelli (LIPU) and other environmental associations in Italy collected enough signatures—500,000 in 50 days—to seek a public referendum on hunting. The organizations want hunting better regulated.

LIPU, May 1986.

Wolf unprotected in Spain

On signing the Bern Convention, Spain excluded the wolf *Canis lupus* from Appendix II, thereby denying it protection in the country. Only the province of Andalusia protects the species and in other regions the wolf is persecuted. The Cantabrian Agricultural Council, for example, is offering 20,000 pesetas (£88) for each wolf killed.

Grupo Lobo Newsletter, 7.

Dolphin decline

The common dolphin *Delphinus delphis* appears to be declining in the northern part of its range in the western Mediterranean—in Italian, French and Spanish waters—although it is still abundant south of 38°N. Pollution, fishing and habitat destruction are probably all contributory factors, and the question needs urgent international attention since it is a migratory species says Alex Aguilar.

Newsletter of the Cetacean Specialist Group, 2.

Greek Society to protect turtles

The Sea Turtle Protection Society was recently set up in Greece, in particular to protect the loggerhead turtle *Caretta caretta*, especially on the island of Zakynthos where tourism and other activities are interfering with its breeding.

Sea Turtle Protection Society, PO Box 51154, GR 15410 Kifissia, Greece.

Greece says no to turtle dove hunt

The Greek Government did not

Briefly . . .

authorize this year's spring shooting of turtle doves *Streptopelia turtur* following pressure from various conservation organizations and individuals. *Birds*, Summer 1986.

Greek park rules approved

Finally, 48 years after the founding of Greece's first national park, at Olympus, the Minister of Agriculture has approved the rules and regulations for the functioning and managing of the 10 Greek national parks.

Nature Bulletin of the Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature, 32.

Cyprus bird kill down

In Cyprus 18 million fewer migrating birds were killed in 1986 than in 1985 following the drastic decline in the use of nets and lime.

naturupa-newsletter-nature, 86-6.

Turkey extends dolphin hunt ban

Turkey's ban on dolphin hunting in the Black Sea has been extended until 31 March 1987. Meanwhile, the Turkish Ministry of Agriculture, Forestry and Rural Affairs, together with the Faculty of Marine Sciences and Technology of the University of the Black Sea, is carrying out a research programme on the dolphin population, its habitat and biological structure.

Turkish Embassy, London.

Important Turkish wetland gets protection

Until a few years ago the Çamalti Tuzlazi, a wetland on the Aegean coast, was rich in bird species. Then one of Turkey's large governmental agencies—the Monopolies Department of the Ministry of Customs and Monopolies—which exploits most of the salt in Turkey, began converting the area into salt dehydration pans by replacing the freshwater with seawater: 8000 ha (20,000 acres) of wetlands and marshes were destroyed. The 182 bird species, including 50 breeding species, that used the marshes were at risk as was much other wildlife. Efforts by Turkey's Society for the Protection of Wildlife, by Dr Siki of Ege University and by the University of 9 Eylül have ensured that

the rest of the 500 ha (1200 acres) is protected and that the marshes are returned to their former state by the Monopolies Agency, the Ministry of Customs and Monopolies and the Ministry of Forestry.

The Society for the Protection of Wildlife, PK 18, Bebek-Istanbul, Turkey.

Ichkeul National Park—a reprieve?

Following an intervention from the World Heritage Secretariat on the effects of dam construction on the Ichkeul National Park in Tunisia, the

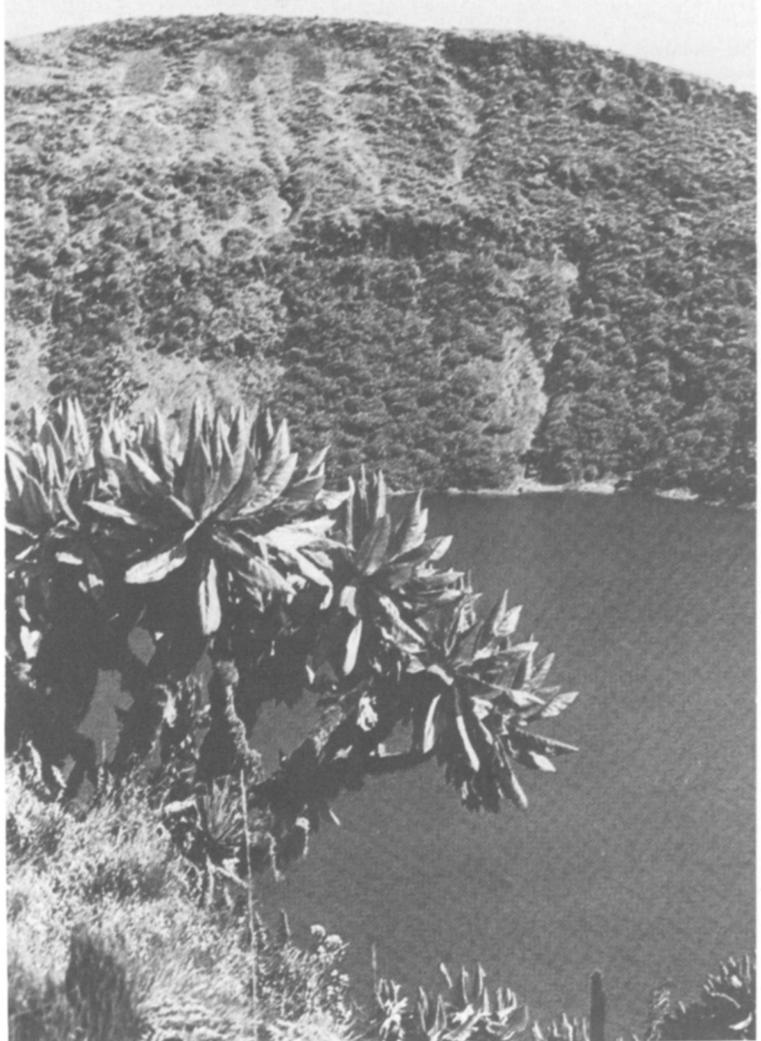
Tunisian Government has announced plans for a sluice, which would provide the water essential for the wetland.

Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas, Members' Newsletter, 35.

Africa

African countries co-operate in poaching control

Cameroon, Congo, Gabon, Central African Republic and the Sudan have set up the Ministerial Conference of the



Bisoke crater lake in Volcanoes National Park, Rwanda. One of a set of postcards produced by the FFPS for the Mountain Gorilla Project.

Briefly . . .



Adult male mountain gorillas in Volcanoes National Park, Rwanda. See 'Cards for Gorillas' below.

Central African States for Wildlife Conservation, with headquarters in Khartoum, the Sudan. The group has signed two agreements—one for co-operation and consultation, and another to create a fund for wildlife conservation, which will be maintained through proceeds from the sale of specimens seized in member states. *TRAFFIC (USA)*, 7, 1.

Threat to Kenya's reserves

More than 1000 pairs of birds nested in the Kisumu Bird Sanctuary in Kenya in 1985. They included sacred ibis, open-billed storks, yellow-billed storks, African spoonbills and black-headed herons. The viability of this small (1.26 ha, 3-acre) reserve is threatened, however, by continual grazing of domestic livestock within the broken perimeter fence and indiscriminate tree-felling. A massive influx of domestic livestock is threatening Tsavo National Park. An observer reports huge herds of cattle from Lake Jipe to Taveta and from

Mbuni to Kitani, with hundreds of square miles of wildlife habitat destroyed. Settlements are also being built in the park, and this dangerous situation should be dealt with before Tsavo is submerged under a sea of cattle. *Swara*, 9, 1.

Kenya's Rhino Rescue Project

The first phase of the Kenyan Government's Rhino Rescue Project is well underway. The objective is to move a number of scattered rhino at present living in very unsafe conditions into Lake Nakuru National Park. The park has been surrounded by a substantial solar-powered electric fence, and temporary holding pens for translocated rhinos are being constructed. Boreholes are being restored to supply drinking troughs, and guard posts are to be built at 10-km (6-mile) intervals along the fence. Much of the work has been funded by the East African Wildlife Society.

Swara, 9, 2.

Cards for gorillas

The FFPS has produced a set of colour postcards, two of which are illustrated here, to raise funds for the Mountain Gorilla Project in Rwanda. The postcards are being donated to the Rwandan Office of Tourism and National Parks, which now co-ordinates the project, to be sold in the Volcanoes National Park and throughout Rwanda. The FFPS is pledged to spend £15,000 this year to help save the gorillas.

War tears apart Uganda's parks

Uganda's national parks once again suffered during the upheavals that led to the formation of a new government in early 1986. During the war the NRA took vehicles and arms from the parks, and poachers took advantage of the lack of park patrols. Settlers moved into Lake Mburo National Park, attacking park staff and damaging park property. The UNLA established a training

Briefly . . .

ground in Murchison Falls National Park and demanded game from the park authority; at first park rangers shot the game, but later the soldiers hunted it themselves, wounding many animals. The NRA took over this park in March and the fleeing soldiers looted and vandalized all park property. Kidepo Valley National Park was attacked, for games and arms, from the north by the Sudanese People's Liberation Army and from the south by UNLA soldiers. With the new government now established the park authority is struggling to put right the damage and to control poaching again. Many gifts of vehicles and equipment have been received, but more are needed. The Uganda Institute of Ecology has resumed preparations for the International Symposium of African Wildlife to mark the Silver Jubilee of the Institute on 8–11 December 1986.

Uganda National Parks, Director's Quarterly Report, January–March 1986.

Sport-hunting in the Selous

In 1985 100 sport-hunting safaris in Tanzania's Selous Game Reserve brought in US\$2 million in foreign exchange, about one-sixth of this going towards reserve management. Ninety-five elephants were shot legally, but also an estimated 500 were shot illegally. The rhino population is now believed to number fewer than 300, down from an estimated 3000 in 1981.

Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas, Members' Newsletter, 35.

Poaching in Tanzania's Selous Game Reserve

In the remote southern and central parts of Tanzania's Selous Game Reserve animals have been decimated by poachers and by certain professional hunters who have allowed clients to overshoot game quotas. Several hunters have been ordered out of the country.

Safari Consultants of London Newsletter, May 1986.

Zaire modifies parrot trade ban

Zaire has lifted its 1984 ban on the export of grey parrots *Psittacus erithacus*, authorizing instead the export of

a maximum of one or two grey parrots per person per year.
TRAFFIC (USA), 7, 1.

Malagasy reserve ceremony

At a ceremony in Madagascar last November Beza Mahafaly Reserve was incorporated into the country's official reserve system. The Reserve was established in 1978 as a research and training field site: the land was given by local people in exchange for a community meeting house and a water storage system, which were funded by WWF–US. Since then scientists have trained many Malagasy students, and several development agencies hope to replicate the project in other parts of the country.
Focus, WWF–US, 8, 2.

Mauritius Wildlife Appeal Fund

The Mauritius Wildlife Appeal Fund, only two years old, reports good progress in several conservation projects. It works closely with the WWF, Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust, The Peregrine Fund and the ICBP, providing vehicles for use in fieldwork by visiting scientists and in projects to conserve the Mauritius kestrel, pink pigeon, echo parakeet, and Mauritius fruit bat, as well as the endangered plants of the island group. It has also funded two guardians to prevent illegal woodcutting on the 24-ha (59-acre) Ile aux Aigrettes where a rehabilitation programme is underway.

Mauritius Wildlife Appeal Fund Annual Report 1985, PO Box 58, Port Louis, Mauritius.

Hope for doomed palm

The single living specimen of *Hyophorbe amaricaulis*, a palm endemic to Mauritius, seemed doomed because its fruits fail to ripen, and taking cuttings is impossible since it has a single apical bud. Now Dr Gerry Douglas, at the Irish National Agricultural Institute, and Dr Janet Blake and Dr Richard Branton, at the Unit of Advanced Propagation Systems at Wye College in England, have cultivated embryos from the unripe fruits producing a total of five plants. Because other *Hyophorbe* species grow in the garden where the single *H. amaricaulis* is found, these plants may be hybrids. The next step is to try to produce plants by clonal propa-

gation of immature inflorescence tissue.
Threatened Plants Newsletter, 16.

Asia (excluding Indo-Malaya)

Japanese alpinists get more protection

Many rare alpine plants in Japan are being collected illegally for sale to florist shops. The atsumoriso *Cypripedium macranthum*, which is closely related to the European lady's slipper orchid, has been dug up in all but one of its known sites and many other species are severely threatened. The Yamanashi Prefecture west of Tokyo, where the problem is particularly acute, has introduced a new law (effective from 1 April 1986) to control the sale, purchase and transfer of about 20 species of alpine plants throughout the Prefecture. Previous laws banned the collection of endangered plants, but this is the first law in Japan to attempt to control commercial trade. People breaking the law may be given up to three months' imprisonment or fined, and all cultivators and florists in the Prefecture must register. The number of volunteer mountain rangers to guard against poachers will be increased from 300 to 500.

Japan Environment Review, 1.

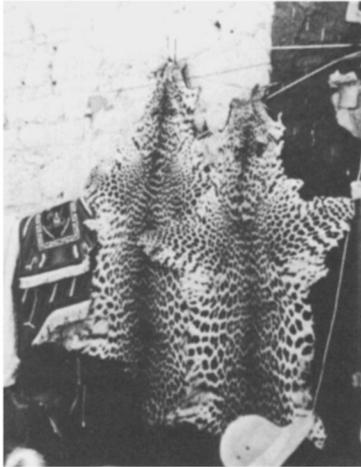
Concern for Japan's forests

Although Japan still has large areas of old broad-leaved forests, these are now being cut. A Welshman, C.W. Nicol, who made a plea to the Forestry Agency to spare the forests around his home in the mountains of central Japan, received hundreds of letters of support from Japanese, who are showing increasing enthusiasm for their native forests. Many new organizations concerned about forests have sprung up: none is yet large enough to exert a powerful influence, but the Forest Agency has begun to respond by decreasing the area of forest that can be cut at any one time and by increasing emphasis on selective cutting to allow natural regeneration. National parks and nature parks cover 54,000 sq km (21,000 sq miles) of Japan's 378,000 sq km (146,000 sq miles), but only a small fraction is totally protected from felling.
Nature (London), 22 May 1986.

Oryx Vol 20 No 4, October 1986

Briefly . . .

Skins for tourists?



Leopard skins on sale in a market in Lhasa, Tibet, photographed by FFPS member, S. Sassoon. The export of these skins is banned under CITES.

Islanders vote for wildlife

In the Japanese elections on 6 July the Liberal Democratic Party won a landslide victory throughout the nation, except in Miyakejima, a tiny volcanic island south of Tokyo. Swayed by the Government's plans to build a US military airfield there, the inhabitants voted instead for the Japan Socialist Party. The islanders have international support; in May the Duke of Edinburgh, President of the World Wildlife Fund, wrote to Japan's Prime Minister and to the US Department of Defense appealing for the plan to be called off to protect the island's wildlife, which includes two endemic birds, the seven islands thrush *Turdus celanops* and Ijima's willow warbler *Phylloscopus ijimae*. The International Council for Bird Preservation passed a resolution in June opposing the airfield construction. *Nature* (London), 24 July 1986.

China shelves dam plan

Construction work on the Three Gorges Dam on the Chan Jiang (Yangtze River) (see *Oryx*, XX, 3, page 123) has been halted for at least two years. *Asia-Pacific People's Environment Network*.

Briefly

Living with cranes

Poyang Lake Nature Reserve in China supports 17,000 people as well as Siberian, white-naped, hooded and common cranes, and a variety of other wetland wildlife. Education programmes have been started by the refuge staff, with the help of the International Crane Foundation, to ensure the continuing coexistence of people and birds. This will be especially important as crane habitats elsewhere deteriorate and more cranes use the lake. Educational work is also going on at the Yancheng Nature Reserve recently established to protect the world's largest flock of red-crowned cranes (400–500 birds) and where staff are finding that the management of the cranes and the people are intertwined. *The ICF Bugle*, 12, 2.

Threat to bird sanctuary

Zhalong Nature Reserve in China's Heilongjiang Province is an important crane nesting area and bird sanctuary, but is being threatened by the local people cutting reeds and fishing. Whooper swans *Cygnus cygnus* stopped nesting there in 1980 and the eastern white stork *Ciconia boyciana* did so in 1983. Red-crowned crane *Grus japonensis* numbers have declined from 500 in 1974 to fewer than 180. Dr George Archibald, Director of the International Crane Foundation, suggests leaving clumps of reed in the vicinity of crane nests uncut, and restricting fishing to the streams and lakes, leaving the shallows to the cranes. A tourist centre has been built and income from visitors is used in conservation work. *WWF News*, 40.

Bird protection growing apace in China

'Bird-loving' and protection activities are attracting ever-growing audiences in China. More than 2000 people attended a bird 'party' in Gucheng Park in Beijing in April, and many provinces, municipalities and autonomous regions have organized bird protection activities and have selected particular birds for attention. The number of birds in China has increased as a result of such efforts; last winter flocks of red-billed (black-headed) gulls visited the city of Kunming

for the first time in 100 years. *Beijing Review*, 29, 22.

China protects turtle resource

A marine turtle hatching area has been set up in Huidong County, Guangdong, and, on Hainan Island, Guangdong, two marine turtle conservation areas are going to be built in the suburbs of Ya Xian (Sanya City) and on the coast of Ling Shui County. After captive-rearing turtles will be tagged and returned to the sea. The Ministry of Farming, Animal Husbandry and Fisheries has appointed a marine turtle observation team to operate from 1986 to 1987. *Marine Turtle Newsletter*, 36.

Indo-Malaya

Pakistan lake deserves more protection

The remote Zangi Nawar lake in the desert of south-west Baluchistan Province in Pakistan should be recognized as a wildfowl refuge of international importance, according to T. J. Roberts who recently surveyed it. It is the only known wetland on the Indian sub-continent that has been visited by whooper swans *Cygnus cygnus* in recent decades and is the breeding place of probably the major population of marbled teal *Marmaronetta angustirostris* anywhere in the region. An estimated 22,000 duck and 66,000 coot winter there, enormous numbers of passage migrants call there and it is the only known locality in Pakistan where the white-tailed lapwing *Vanellus leucurus* breeds. The Government of Baluchistan declared the lake a Game Sanctuary in 1983, but due to limited funds there are only four game watchers, who have neither transport nor binoculars and therefore cannot control illegal shooting effectively. *J. Bomb. Nat. Hist. Soc.* 82, 3, 540–47.

Rockets or ridleys?

A proposal to set up India's rocket testing range at Satbhaya in Orissa is viewed with concern by conservationists. Satbhaya is on the 35-km (22-mile) Gahirmatha beach, which forms the eastern boundary of the Bhitarkanika

257

Briefly . . .



Wildlife Sanctuary, and which is perhaps the biggest and one of the world's most important olive ridley *Lepidochelys olivacea* nesting beaches (800,000 turtles nested there in 1984). The sanctuary, one of the few mangrove forests left on the eastern coast of India, was gazetted in 1975 for the endangered saltwater crocodile. The Sea Turtle Specialist Group, formed by The Government of India's Department of Environment, has recommended the creation of a marine national park at Gahirmatha and a ban on fishing. About 300 dead ridleys washed ashore at Gahirmatha in 1983 after drowning in trawl nets or in poachers' boats; only one-tenth as many were found in 1984, thanks to coastguard patrols. *Hamadryad*, 11, 1–2. *Marine Turtle Newsletter*, 36.

Tree-dwelling skink discovered

A tree-dwelling skink *Dasia haliana*, previously known only from Sri Lanka, has been discovered in the Mundanthurai Wildlife Sanctuary in Tamil Nadu, India, and in the southernmost part of the Western Ghats of that state. *Hamadryad*, 11, 1–2.

Scrolls for turtles

WWF–India has recruited a traditional scroll-painter to help spread the word about the need for turtle conservation in Bengal villages. Ranjit Chitrakar has now been involved with the WWF–India education programme for three years and is very effective. Traditional scroll-painters, using hand-painted scrolls as long as 7 m and singing

specially composed songs, attract vast audiences as they wander from village to village and can be a more successful technique with rural people than conventional slide-shows, films and posters, which can be seen as interference from city-dwellers.

Marine Turtle Newsletter, 36.

Sri Lanka's dolphins—are too many caught?

More than 1000 spinner, bottle-nosed, striped and Risso's dolphins are being killed each month by Sri Lankan fishermen, and the National Aquatic Resources Agency is soon to make recommendations for conservation measures to the Minister of Fisheries. The dolphins are being used as long-line bait and for human consumption, being sold as dugongs, which have not been seen in Sri Lankan waters for decades. *The Island (Sri Lanka)*, 16 April 1986.

Andaman and Nicobar Islands to be devastated?

A proposal by the Indian Government to declare the Andaman and Nicobar Islands a 'free port' is being opposed by Indian conservationists and those concerned with the welfare of the tribal people. The commercial development involved would devastate the wildlife of the islands and further threaten the survival of the indigenous tribes. *Hamadryad*, 11, 1–2.

Geese flown to Kashmir

In May a consignment of eggs of the

bar-headed goose *Anser indicus* was sent from the Wildfowl Trust's headquarters in Gloucestershire, UK, to Kashmir in a joint venture of the Wildfowl Trust and the FFPS. The geese will be the beginning of a new wildfowl collection in a deer park and nature reserve for local people, which is being created by the Jammu and Kashmir Department of Wildlife Protection. The eggs were flown to India free of charge by British Airways.

Nepal's plan for Annapurna

New measures to protect the spectacular Annapurna Conservation Area from the pressures of tourism and a rapidly growing local population have been announced by the Nepal-based King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation and the World Wildlife Fund. Trees will be planted, alternative energy sources will be developed, conservation education programmes will educate the local population, and the growing number of tourists will be better managed and charged an entry fee. Management of the area will be handled entirely by the Nepalese. WWF.

Ganges susu declining in Nepal

The Ganges susu *Platanista gangetica* is disappearing from Nepal's rivers due to the construction of dams, which block the migration of the dolphins and cause the depletion of their fish prey. About 40 susus are believed to remain in Nepal, about 20 in the Naranyi River and the rest in the Gandaki and Koshi Rivers.

Oryx Vol 20 No 4, October 1986

Briefly . . .



Dolphins are also illegally caught for sale to folk healers in the Indian market near the border. Tej Kumar Shrestha of Tribhwan University, Kathmandu, is proposing to carry out research on the ecology, abundance and migration of the species, especially urgent in view of the imminent destruction of the Kamali Gorge by the building of a dam—the Gorge may be a dolphin breeding area. *Newsletter of the Cetacean Specialist Group*, 2.

Open-bill stork needs helping hand

As many as 15,000 open-bill storks

Anastomus oscitans nest in the protected forest surrounding the ancient Buddhist temple, Wat Phai Lom, near Bangkok, making it the largest open-bill colony in Asia and the only significant one in Thailand. Colony numbers seem to have been falling recently and a research student at Kasetsart University, Bangkok, has found that the colony size is limited by available nest sites. These are decreasing—many old trees have died due to toxicity from huge quantities of droppings contaminating the soil, and storks are nesting in bamboos, from which eggs and young are easily blown from the nests. If the colony is to have a future, a tree-planting campaign is

This set of stamps featuring elephants, which was issued on 5 August 1986 by Sri Lanka, was produced by the Crown Agents Stamp Ltd, Old Inn House, 2 Carshalton Road, Sutton, Surrey SM1 4RN, UK.

needed and artificial nesting sites should be provided. *Flying Free*, 4, 1.

Gurney's pitta rediscovered

Despite being declared extinct at the end of 1985, a nest of Gurney's pitta *Pitta gurneyi* was discovered in Thailand in 1986 by Dr Philip Round.

Agreement to save kouprey

The three countries of Indochina—Laos, Kampuchea and Vietnam—have entered an international agreement to save the kouprey *Bos sauveli*, the world's most endangered bovine. Fewer than 200 individuals are believed to survive in the war-damaged border areas of these countries and in Thailand. Inspired by Professor Vo Quy of the University of Hanoi, the agreement sets out a management plan that includes setting up a transfrontier reserve and co-operation to stop poachers crossing national borders. *WWF News*, 41.

Conservation in Vietnam

Vietnam's National Conservation Strategy is going into effect. The Prime Minister has officially endorsed one of its key recommendations, the establishment of a National Board for the Conservation of Nature. Two immediate measures to rehabilitate the country's ravaged environment are a large-scale family-planning programme and a



Trekking tourists in the Annapurna Conservation Area will be better managed in future to protect the fragile ecosystem (Lisa van Gruisen/World Wildlife Fund—US).

Briefly . . .

massive reforestation campaign. Vietnam is losing around 200,000 ha (500,000 acres) of forest annually, mainly due to the demand for fuel. The launch of a major tree-planting campaign is planned during New Year celebrations in 1987. The rehabilitation of mangrove areas damaged by Agent Orange and Napalm is more difficult: 20 per cent of former mangroves (20,000 ha) in the Camau peninsula is still wasteland—replanting efforts, hampered by lack of equipment and funds, have had only partial success. However, mangrove rehabilitation near Ho Chi Minh city has been more successful—trees planted eight years ago now yield a self-sustaining charcoal supply for the city's residents. *WWF News*, 41.

Philippines bans wildlife exports

The new Philippines Government has banned wildlife exports, including those of crab-eating macaques *Macaca fascicularis*, to the USA for medical research. *The International Primate Protection League*, 14 May 1986.

Philippines seek truth about log smuggling

The Philippines' Minister of Natural Resources has announced a ban on log exports, effective from August 1986. Illegal logging operations sanctioned by Philippine's deposed President Marcos depleted the country's forest reserves from 36.4 million acres (14.7 million ha) to 5.7 million acres (2.3 million ha). Most of the timber was smuggled out to Japan, South Korea and Taiwan. Japan has refused Philippine Government requests to trace the flow of smuggled logs to Japan or to review records of Philippine log exports to Japan during the Marcos years, and denies that Japan co-operated in the smuggling. *The Atlanta Constitution*, 22 May 1986. *Mainichi Daily News*, 25 April 1986.

Seaweeds need management

Many inshore fisheries in the Philippines are now unproductive due to over-fishing and destructive fishing methods, and the exploitation of seaweeds is becoming an increasingly important source of income for coastal people. Some seaweeds are gathered from wild

stocks and these must be conserved, says Professor Gavino C. Trono of the Marine Science Institute in Quezon City. Some gathering areas for certain species within the Lingayan Gulf are already showing signs of overexploitation. A major step forward would be the establishment of a National Seaweed Research and Development Program. *Enviroscope*, V, 2.

New bird in Tanimbar Islands

An undescribed species of bush warbler of the genus *Cettia* was discovered by F. G. Rozendaal and C. M. Rozendaal-Kortekaas in a survey of the Tanimbar Islands in the South Moluccas, Indonesia, in late 1985. The Islands' bat and bird fauna had been largely unstudied since 1926, and the survey added 42 species to the bird list (now 133 species) and five species to the previous bat list of three species. F. G. Rozendaal, from the Netherlands, recommends that the existing conservation area on Yamdena, the largest island, should be extended, and says that much remains to be learned about the Tanimbarese fauna. *WWF Monthly Report*, May 1986.

North America

Research on toxins

The Wildlife Toxicology Fund was launched in 1985 by Environment Canada (Canada's federal environment ministry), WWF—Canada and Noranda Inc. to support research on the effect of toxic chemicals on wildlife. By March 1986 22 projects had been accepted, ranging from the evaluation of the toxicity of petroleum oils to seabirds to the impact of metals mobilized by acid rain on lake wildlife. *WWF News*, 41.

Sealers seek new markets

Newfoundland sealers, whose business collapsed when the EEC banned imports of seal pup skins in 1983, have set up a seal pelt processing plant in Fleurs de Lys, financed by personal cash and the Newfoundland Government. The pelts will come from older seals shot with rifles; about 15,000–

20,000 skins a year will be processed to produce boots and handicraft items, and the meat will be eaten. The sealers' co-op is investigating potential new markets in Asia.

Globe and Mail, 26 April 1986.

The Evening Telegram, 26 April 1986.

Residents want bears to stay

Residents of Churchill, on Hudson Bay in Canada, are complaining about a government plan to get rid of the polar bears *Ursus maritimus* that roam its streets in spring as they migrate south to breed and in autumn as they travel north again. The bears present problems—one man was killed two years ago—but they also bring in tourist dollars. Local tourist operators want a rubbish tip reopened to the bears because they fear losing Can\$1.9 million each year if the bears are kept away. *IUCN Bulletin*, 17 (1–3).

Decrease in fin whale sightings

Whaling for fin whales *Balaenoptera physalus* off eastern Canada ended in 1972, but recent surveys between 1976 and 1983 show a significant decrease in fin whale sightings rather than the expected increase. Researcher Hal Whitehead cannot explain the decline, suggesting that the fin whales may be being out-competed by humpback whales, or that they may have been affected by the low capelin (their major prey) numbers of the late 1970s, or by the development of an offshore capelin fishery in the early 1970s.

Newsletter of the Cetacean Specialist Group, 2.

Sea lions little threat to fishermen

Although fishermen in British Columbia view Steller sea lions *Eumetopias jubatus* as enemies, a three-year study by the Pacific Biological Station in Nanaimo has shown this to be unjustified. The sea lions' diet was shown to be 40 per cent herring, 25 per cent hake and walleye pollock, 15 per cent dogfish, 10 per cent salmon and 10 per cent of miscellaneous marine animals. They thus consume very little of the valuable salmon catch, and although they take herring, they also take the herring's

Oryx Vol 20 No 4, October 1986

Briefly . . .

predators—dogfish, walleye pollock and hake.
Vancouver Sun, 18 April 1986.

Swift fox programme hampered

Of 35 radio-collared swift foxes *Vulpes velox* released since 1983 in the reintroduction programme in Alberta, Canada, 14 are dead: 10 were killed by coyotes and bobcats, two were probably killed by eagles, one was struck by a car and another died in its den from unknown causes, according to Stephen Herrero, founder of the project. The project, costing \$60,000 a year, is also short of funds; Imperial Oil and the Alberta Recreation, Parks and Wildlife Foundation each donates \$20,000 a year.
Vancouver Sun, 3 May 1986.

Canada's sea otter population thriving

The future of the sea otter *Enhydra lutris* in Canada looks bright. Extirpated there by hunting in the early 1900s, it was reintroduced by taking 89 otters from Alaska and releasing them along Vancouver's west coast in 1969–1972. By 1984 the number had risen to 350 animals, and sightings have occurred in areas outside the original transplant area.
IUCN Otter Specialist Group Bulletin, 1.

Four plants and three fishes

In March the following taxa were added to the US List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife: *Achyranthes rotundata* is a shrub endemic to the island of O'ahu in the Hawaiian Islands where two populations remain; the Mauna kea silversword *Argyroxiphium sandwicense* ssp. *sandwicense* also grows in Hawaii where it has been nearly eliminated by feral animals; the Minnesota trout lily *Erythronium propullans* is Minnesota's only endemic, now down to 26 sites; an aster *Hymenoxys texana* is now confined to a single population in an area of wet grassland near Houston, Texas; the June sucker *Chasmistes liorus* is endemic to Utah Lake where fewer than 1000 adults probably remain; the desert pupfish *Cyprinodon macularis*, once common in desert streams and springs in the lower Gila and Colorado river systems, is now known from only two of

its historical locations in California and Arizona; the Railroad Valley springfish *Crenichthys nevadae* is native to six thermal springs in Nevada where human activities have altered its habitat and resulted in decreased populations.
Endangered Species Technical Bulletin, XI, 4.

US lists three more species

In April the Fish and Wildlife Service added three species to the US List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants. The Tumamoc globe-berry *Tumamoca maddougallii* is a perennial vine belonging to the gourd family, which survives in 30 populations in Arizona and as 60 plants in Mexico. Its Arizona habitat is threatened by agricultural and urban development. *Hibiscadelphus distans* is a small tree (Malvaceae) of which only 10 individuals remain in the wild, in the Pu'u Ka Pele Forest Reserve on the island of Kaua'i, Hawaii. It is threatened by feral goat browsing, competition with introduced species, disturbance from hikers, collecting and vandalism. The Sonora chub *Gila ditaenia*, a small member of the minnow family, has been listed as threatened because of the introduction of exotic fishes into its range and because of potential mining activities, which would pollute its habitat. It has a limited range in Santa Cruz County, Arizona, and Sonora, Mexico.
Endangered Species Technical Bulletin, X, 5.

US largest importer of wildlife

The WWF-US has launched a petition campaign to draw the attention of the US Government to the seriousness of the illegal wildlife trade and the need for action to stop it. The US is the world's

largest importer of wildlife and an estimated 25 per cent of declared shipments into the country are illegal.
Focus, WWF-US, 8, 2.

Gourmet suppliers arrested

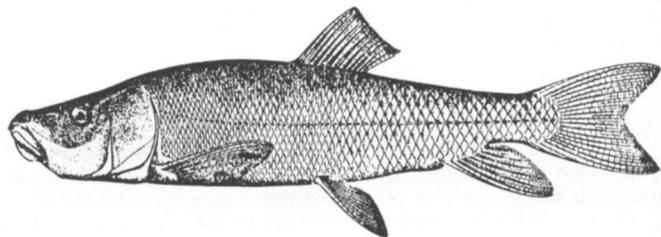
State game wardens in Atlanta, USA, arrested more than 100 people in May in raids on fish markets, meat and fur dealers. The arrests resulted from a 20-month undercover operation to crack down on poachers who supply sturgeon, turtles and other wildlife as gourmet foods.
The New York Times, 23 May 1986.

Cache River Basin—a refuge

The US Migratory Bird Conservation Commission has approved the purchase of 2619 acres (1060 ha) in wildlife-rich Cache River Basin in Arkansas to begin to establish a national wildlife refuge. The US Fish and Wildlife Service expects to acquire a further 35,000 acres (14,000 ha) eventually to secure the future of this waterfowl wintering area. In the past conservationists fought a proposal to canalize the river and drain wetlands for agriculture.
Outdoor News Bulletin, 40, 9.

Snake or dam?

Senator Lloyd Bentsen of Texas is challenging the Fish and Wildlife Service's proposal to list the Concho water snake under the US Endangered Species Act. He is supporting Texas interests in a privately financed dam, which he says is vital to the future of towns in West Texas. The dam and its reservoir would destroy about 74 per cent of the critical habitat of the Concho water snake, which is found only along a



June sucker, a fish endemic to Utah Lake (drawing by S.F. Denton, by kind permission of the US Fish and Wildlife Service).

Briefly . . .

200-mile (320-km) stretch of the Colorado River.
The New York Times, 29 April 1986.

Cacti seized

Simultaneous raids by the US Fish and Wildlife officers on three homes and plant nurseries in southern California on 2 March 1986 resulted in the confiscation of 200 rare cacti. They included 56 *Ariocarpus* ('living rock' plants), 96 *Aztekium ritteri* (the 'Aztek' cactus), and 54 *Lophophora* (known as 'peyote'), all believed to have been smuggled into the US from Mexico.
TRAFFIC (USA), 7, 1.

Tortoises victims of target practise

Desert tortoises *Gopherus agassizii* are declining in California and elsewhere. Kristin Berry examined 635 carcasses at 11 study sites in the Californian deserts and found that 14.3 per cent had died of gunshot wounds. In the western Mojave desert, which is heavily visited for recreational purposes, 20.7 per cent of tortoise carcasses had gunshot signs.
Berry, K.H. 1986. *Wildl. Soc. Bull.* **14**, 127–132.

Condors can be captured

The US Court of Appeals ruled that the US Fish and Wildlife Service may take into captivity the last three Californian condors *Gymnogyps californianus* in the wild. The injunction against the action was issued in January at the request of the National Audubon Society, which argued that the capture would make it impossible to re-establish a wild population since removing the birds would open up their habitat to commercial development. The Interior Department, however, assures that it will continue its efforts to purchase Hudson Ranch, a major condor feeding area.
The Washington Post, 11 June 1986.

Central America

Extinct bird seen

American and Cuban scientists discovered at least two ivory-billed wood-

peckers *Campephilus principalis bairdii* in a Cuban forest in a March–April search. The Government of Cuba has banned all logging in the area and is allowing only scientists to enter. The last confirmed sighting of the bird was in the 1970s, and the American subspecies has not been seen in its range in the southern US for more than 60 years.
The New York Times, 5 May 1986.

Marine parks in Cayman Islands

The Marine Conservation (Marine Parks) Regulations 1986 came into operation on 1 March and three categories of marine parks have been designated on Grand Cayman, with more proposed for Little Cayman and Cayman Brac. In North Sound, the Little Sound Environmental Zone covers an important wetland and mangrove site where the taking of any marine life, the use of anchors, the entry of any person into the water and speeds in excess of 5 knots are prohibited. In four Marine Park Zones, on the north and west coasts, taking of marine life and anchoring of boats is restricted, and in nine Replenishment Zones around the coast the taking of conch and lobster and the use of spearguns, fish traps and most types of net are prohibited.
Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas, Members' Newsletter. **35**.

New cactus project

Under the auspices of the Cactus and Succulent Species Specialist Group of IUCN, a team of Mexican, American and British botanists is to survey the status of several populations of Mexico's endangered cacti. The team will train four or five Mexican graduate students in the techniques of rare plant population monitoring.
Threatened Plants Newsletter, **16**.

Bad news for jabiru stork

The jabiru stork *Jabiru mycteria* continues to decline in Central America. A helicopter survey in Campeche State, Mexico, donated by the federal oil company, found only four individual jabiru storks in 1986, compared with 10 in 1985. It was also evident that important stork habitat was being converted rapidly into cattle pasture and rice fields; extensive areas of primary lowland

forest in the jabiru nesting area were cut in the past year. The Brehm Fund for International Bird Conservation is trying to halt this unnecessary destruction of critical wetland habitat and is also organizing an information campaign about the jabiru in the region where it remains,
Flying Free, **4**, 1.

Protection for black howlers

The black howler monkeys *Alouatta pigra* of Bermudian Landing in Belize are being protected by the local community; so far 12 landowners have agreed to follow land-use plans designed to protect the monkey's habitat (see *Oryx*, **XX**, 1, page 53). Dr Robert Horwich, a Wisconsin biologist, who had the idea for the community sanctuary in 1981, is setting up a series of howler reserves along the Belize River.

Belize—a proposed reserve

The newly proposed Upper Bladen Wildlife Sanctuary is in the unspoilt rain forests of the Maya Mountains in southern Belize. The 400-sq-km (154-sq-mile) area has escaped logging and is home to jaguar, puma, ocelot, howler and spider monkeys, tapir, ocellated turkey, scarlet macaw and perhaps nesting harpy eagles. Its caves are unexplored, and Ancient Maya ruins have recently been uncovered. Because of the country's difficult economic situation, the Belize Government gives official approval for a reserve only when development costs for the first five years have been secured from outside sources. The Brehm Fund for International Bird Conservation based in West Germany is seeking funds.
Flying Free, **4**, 1.

Tracking iguanas to market

Green iguanas are prized for food in Central and South America and their eggs are collected for their alleged aphrodisiac qualities. Human predation, habitat destruction and export as pets are decimating populations. The US-based Centre for Reproduction of Endangered Species and the four-year-old zoo in Belize are working to establish a captive-breeding facility at the zoo with iguanas bought from public

Oryx Vol 20 No 4, October 1986

Briefly . . .

markets. Year-old captive-reared hatchlings will be released into the wild tattooed with a code number. Iguana sellers at markets will be given postcards to send for a reward when they receive tattooed animals so that researchers will be able to keep track of the wild population.

CRES Report, Summer 1986.

Emergency grant for biosphere reserve

Researchers visiting Rio Platano Biosphere Reserve in Honduras at the end of 1985 were horrified to discover seven bulldozers cutting new roads into the core zone, which should be completely protected. WWF immediately approved an emergency grant to help the Honduran Department of Natural Renewable Resources, the Honduran Ecological Association and the Honduran Forestry Department Corporation to protect the area. Plans include establishing reserve borders, restricting settlement, initiating education programmes and encouraging farmers to practise agroforestry to take the pressure off untouched forest. Logging permits have now been revoked in the reserve, which was set up only six years ago.

Focus, 8, 3.

Goldmining damaging ecosystems in Costa Rica

The number of goldminers in Corcovado National Park in Costa Rica increased from 15 in 1975 to 1400 in 1985. The mining has seriously damaged aquatic and terrestrial ecosystems in about one-quarter of the park. To help Costa Rica meet this threat, WWF-US gave financial help to pay for new guard stations, a nationwide education campaign and peaceful negotiation to persuade miners to leave. The Costa Rican Parks Service staff have so far persuaded half the miners to leave and they are working with other groups to identify alternative job opportunities.

Focus, WWF-US, 8, 2.

Coral reserve damaged by oil

A 55,000-gallon oil spill from a ruptured tank at a refinery in Panama on 27 April seriously damaged a large coral-reef

Briefly

biological reserve on Panama's Caribbean coast. Thousands of marine organisms have been killed and dozens of research projects have been destroyed at Galeta Island Marine Laboratory according to the Smithsonian Institution.

The Washington Post, 22 May 1986.

South America

Trinidad and Tobago fisheries threat

The Government of Trinidad and Tobago should act immediately to ban all inshore trawling and maintain 12-mile (19-km) offshore limits on its coast, wherever possible, bearing in mind the proximity of Venezuela. Trawlers—many from other countries—are levelling the sea bed and destroying fish and shrimp spawning and feeding grounds, and unless measures are taken soon the inshore fishing could collapse.

Naturalist, 6, 8.

Recovery of Galápagos penguins and flightless cormorants

Galápagos penguins *Spheniscus mendiculus* and flightless cormorants *Nannopterum harrisi* in the Galápagos, which suffered drastic population declines in the 1982–83 El Niño, largely recovered by 1985—although the penguins had a delayed start, perhaps because of the length of time needed to form new breeding pairs. In September–October 1985 it was estimated that there were 1500–3000 penguins and 900–1200 cormorants. These sedentary birds remain vulnerable, however; although they have shown their capacity to survive a natural disaster, they are constantly threatened by introduced dogs, cats and rats invading their limited range.

Noticias de Galápagos, 43.

Fund for Galápagos

The US Nature Conservancy has launched a campaign to establish a US\$1,500,000 endowment fund for the Charles Darwin Foundation in the Galápagos Islands. The Government of Ecuador and the US Agency for Inter-

national Development have each contributed US\$150,000. Research on the islands has been suffering from unreliable and inadequate funding.

Noticias de Galápagos, 43.

Lantana threat to petrel

The Hawaiian or dark-rumped petrel *Pterodroma phaeopygia* in the Galápagos Islands faces a new threat. While control measures against introduced mammalian predators on Floreana Island are having some success, the introduced aggressive plant *Lantana camara* is spreading into the petrel's breeding areas. *Lantana* thickets have already replaced areas of native vegetation in the highlands close to Cerro Pajas, the crater of which is the breeding site for the largest remaining colony of dark-rumped petrels in the Galápagos. The spread of *Lantana* also threatens some populations of rare plants in the area.

Noticias de Galápagos, 43.

Pigs and goats to go from San Salvador

A feral pig and goat eradication programme is being carried out on San Salvador (Santiago) in the Galápagos Islands by the Charles Darwin Research Station and the Galápagos National Park Service. It is hoped that all 6000 feral pigs will be gone by the end of 1986 and plans are in hand to deal with an estimated 80,000 goats in early 1987. Goats have already been removed from Española, Santa Fe, Rábida, Marchena, and have been almost eradicated from Pinta.

WWF fights park encroachment in Peru

WWF-US is making a major effort to protect the Rio Abiseo National Park in Peru from human activities by funding the hiring, training and equipping of guards and the education of local people. Rio Abiseo includes the best cloud forest in Peru and a variety of other habitats, which are home to, among others, the threatened yellow-tailed woolly monkey and the spectacled bear. Road construction, hunting, slash-and-burn farming and grazing are all taking their toll of the wildlife. The

263

Briefly . . .

park's isolation makes it vulnerable to abuse from poachers, miners, cattle-owners and farmers.
Focus, 8, 3.

Brazil protects marine mammals

Close on the heels of the news of Brazil's whaling ban (*Oryx*, XX, 2, page 118) came the announcement of a new protection act (No. 11, 21/02/86), which prohibits the harassment, hunting or capture of small cetaceans, pinnipeds and sirenians in Brazilian waters. Large numbers of La Plata dolphins *Pontoporia blainvillei* and some sea lions are killed in commercial fisheries; an unknown number of dolphins are caught to be used for bait in shrimp and shark fisheries and the pink dolphin of the Amazon is being captured for aquaria. It is hoped that this creditable new law will be enforced effectively, bringing an end to these and similar practices.

Robin Best, Department of Physiology, University of Cambridge, CB2 3EG, UK. Vera M. F. da Silva, Instituto Nacional de Pesquisas da Amazonia, Manaus, Amazonas, Brazil.

Golden bird needs reserve

The golden parakeet (golden conure) *Aratinga guarouba* could be extinct in part of its range in northern Brazil by 1990 unless conservation measures are adopted, according to David Oren and Fernando Novaes. The birds are hunted for the pet trade, as agricultural pests and for meat, and the ban on domestic trade should be enforced. The species is protected in the western part of its range in the Tapajós National Park, but a reserve is urgently needed in the eastern part, which is being developed rapidly. The Brazilian National Park Service is studying the feasibility of a new reserve, which would also protect many other endemics, within the old 1.6-million-ha (3.9-million-acre) Gurupi National Forest, which has largely been taken over by timber companies and cattle ranches.

Biological Conservation, 36, 4.

Mineral rush in Amazonia

Prospecting rights have been granted for one-third of a 52-million-ha (128-million-acre) area in the greater Amazon basin, which is occupied by 77 Indian

reserves. Brazil's National Association of Geologists and anthropologists working for a documentation centre in São Paulo have compiled a list that shows that 537 concessions for prospecting have already been granted and another 1732 applied for; 40 per cent of the companies involved are transnational—including Brascan, British Petroleum, Shell, and General Electric. The interest in possible gold and oil in the area follows the chance discovery of the giant Carajás mineral field a few years ago. The concessions are concentrated in the upper river Negro in the north-west, the northern territory of Roraima, the western state of Rondônia and the Carajás area in the east. The tribes affected include the Tucano, Waimiri-Atroari, Yanomami Arara and the Uru-Eu-Wau-Wau.

The Guardian, 3 May 1986.

Lion tamarins—breeding success

The golden lion tamarin *Leontopithecus rosalia* captive-breeding programme at the Rio de Janeiro Primate Centre and the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust, which started with 70 individuals in 1972, resulted in more than 400 individuals by 1985, according to Jeremy Mallinson, Co-Chairman of the International Recovery and Management Committee for the species.

Nature (London), 26 June 1986.

Argentina's trade bans

Argentina has announced three new wildlife trade bans in accordance with Wildlife Conservation Law 22.471. Resolución No. 24 banned the export of live specimens and subproducts of boa constrictor *Boa constrictor occidentalis*, yellow anaconda *Eunectes notaeus* and greater rhea *Rhea americana* from February. Resolución No. 62 prohibited internal trade and export of all live indigenous mammals, birds and reptiles, except pests and specimens bred in registered facilities or species of special scientific interest, from 14 March. Resolución No. 63 prohibited internal trade and export of live specimens and subproducts of pampas cat *Felis colocolo*, Geoffrey's cat *F. geoffroyi*, kodkod *F. guigna*, margay *F. weidii*, little spotted cat *F. tigrina*, south Brazilian ocelot *F.*

pardalis mitis, jaguarundi *F. yagouaroundi*, Andean cat *F. jacobita* and puma *F. concolor* from 14 March.
TRAFFIC (USA), 7, 1.

TRAFFIC's achievements

TRAFFIC's new office in Uruguay has achieved much in its first year to curb illegal wildlife trade. Its Director Juan Villalba-Macias worked with Customs officials to close down the port of Montevideo to illegal wildlife traffic originating in Paraguay and bound for Europe and Japan. He also initiated the declaration of the pampas deer as a National Monument in Uruguay, investigated the illegal trade in endangered pudus in Argentina and Chile, evaluated captive-breeding of tortoises and parrots, and built up a strong liaison capability with South American governments and conservation agencies.
Focus. WWF-US, 8, 2.

Otter stronghold needs monitoring

Researchers studying the southern river otter or huillín *Lutra provocax*—'indeterminate' in the IUCN Red Data Book—in Argentina found evidence of the otter's presence at only 32 of 275 sites in four north-Andean Patagonic National Parks, most of them in the Nahuel Huapi Lake sub-basin. The species has disappeared from the other three parks in the last 30–40 years, apparently due to intensive hunting. There is also a population of unknown site on Staten Island (Tierra del Fuego). Dr Claudio Chehebar and his colleagues in Argentina aim to devise a management strategy and recommend reintroduction of the otters into Lanin, Puelo and Los Alerces National Parks through translocation as well as monitoring and protection of the Nahuel Huapi population and protection of the Staten Island ecosystem.

IUCN Otter Specialist Group Bulletin, 1.

Australia/Antarctica

1986 kangaroo quotas

The Australian kangaroo quotas set on 22 January 1986 were: New South Wales 577,000; Western Australia

Oryx Vol 20 No 4, October 1986

Briefly . . .

240,000; South Australia 226,000; Tasmania 250,000. In Tasmania the quota covers two species—Bennett's wallaby (140,000) and the rufous wallaby (110,000)—but there is no accurate monitoring of population sizes and trends, and the size of the legal non-commercial kill far exceeds the commercial quota (in 1985 the legal non-commercial kill in Tasmania was more than one million). No Queensland quota was set because of disagreement between the state and federal governments about how many kangaroos there are in Queensland.
Australian Conservation Foundation Newsletter, 18, 2.

Kangaroo export ban

The Australian Government has suspended the export of all kangaroo products after criticism of last year's kangaroo cull in Queensland. After a six-month enquiry, the Administrative Appeals Tribunal accused the Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service of being more interested in pest control and maintenance of the kangaroo products industry than in wildlife protection. The State Government issued licences for 1.4 million animals to be killed, 320,000 above the quota; there was no adequate monitoring of the separate culling quotas for different species and it was possible that the survival of one culled species, the whiptail wallaby *Macropus parryi*, could be endangered in Queensland.
New Scientist, 26 June 1986.

Australia bans gillnets

Australia has announced that it is banning gillnets of more than 2.5 km (1.5 miles) long in order to halt the drownings of thousands of dolphins each year. The Taiwanese fishing fleet, which has been using nets up to 20 miles (32 km) long, declared that it will pull out of Australia's 200-mile zone by 1 July.
Monitor, 19 May 1986.

Dolphins free in Australia

Australia's Senate Select Committee on Animal Welfare has recommended that no further whales or dolphins be taken from the wild for display purposes and that oceanaria be eventually phased

out. The Committee concluded that cetaceans generally have paid a high price for the dubious advantages of captivity. The Federal Government and the New South Wales Government are expected to alter legislation to ban the capture of cetaceans for display purposes in the near future. Victoria has already announced its intention—on 24 December 1985—to amend current laws to prevent the display of captive dolphins in Victoria and to prevent their capture from Victorian waters; Victoria's decision is a world first and the Director-General of the IUCN has written commending the State's decision.
Australian Conservation Foundation Newsletter, 18, 2.

Bat caves threatened

The Australian Heritage Commission has reported that the use of explosives to mine limestone is destroying cave formations at Mt Etna Caves, Queensland, and the mining is threatening the survival of Bat Cleft and its bat colony. More than 80 per cent of Australia's rare little bent-winged bats *Mintopterus australis* use Bat Cleft as a maternity site.
Wildlife Alert, 2, 2.

A frenzy of crocodile killing

The recent killing of two women by crocodiles in Queensland has led to much crocodile killing. Following the death in the Daintree River in December 1985, approximately 60 crocodiles were shot in the Cairns region. In the Gulf of Carpentaria, site of the second death, fishermen are carrying guns and shooting crocodiles on sight. In spite of the illegality of killing crocodiles in Queensland, no one has been prosecuted. Former Queensland Minister of the Environment, Martin Tenni, stated in Brisbane that crocodiles should be completely wiped out.
Australian Conservation Foundation Newsletter, 18, 3.

Marine park declared

Western Australia's first marine park, Marmion Marine Park, has been established just north of Perth. The most urgent management task is to regulate professional and recreational fishing; the very accessible reefs have been heavily overfished and there have been

major changes in the plant and animal communities.
Landscape, 1, 4.

Controversial logging in Tasmania

When the Tasmanian Government allowed logging to begin in Farmhouse Creek in February, a Wilderness Society vigil camp was established in protest. The area is part of the proposed Western Tasmania National Park, and the Federal Government said it should not be logged. Confrontations have since occurred between conservationists at the camp and timber workers: at one stage a well-known supporter of the Tasmanian forests, Dr Bob Brown, was fired on by two men with guns. The Tasmanian Government provocatively encouraged the logging company, Risby's, to cross Farmhouse Creek before negotiations were completed with the Federal Government. There is apparently no need for the logging industry to cross the Creek into sensitive forest areas because sawlogs are available elsewhere and are at present being pulped for the Australian Newspaper Mills.

Australian Conservation Foundation Newsletter, 18, 3.

Takahe more important than wapiti

New Zealand's Wildlife Service has been captive-rearing the takahe *Porphyrio mantelli*, a flightless rail, with a view to establishing a second population in the wild, thus ensuring against the possibility that disease could wipe out the only wild population in the Murchison Mountains. The proposed site is in Fiordland's Stuart Mountains, and deer-stalkers are opposing the move because the introduced North American wapiti, or elk, *Cervus elaphus* herd there may have to be removed because it competes with the takahe for food. The takahe population numbers only 200 birds.
Forest and Bird, 17, 1.

Native plants versus the tahr

New Zealand's Forest Service is proposing to create a breeding area for tahr *Hemitragus jemlahicus*, an introduced Himalayan goat, between Arthurs Pass

Briefly . . .

and Mt Cook National Parks for the benefit of hunters. Conservationists oppose the plan because the area is of major conservation value, containing a number of rare alpine plants, the survival of which would be threatened by tahr browsing.

Forest and Bird, 17, 1.

Protection for the kea

The kea *Nestor notabilis*, an omnivorous alpine parrot, needs full legal protection, and New Zealand's Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society is running a campaign to that end, supported by the Government's Wildlife Service. The bird has partial protection under the Wildlife Act 1953, which means that it is protected in national parks and reserves, but may be killed elsewhere if it causes damage. They are, in fact, shot indiscriminately by some landowners, who claim that they kill sheep, and who capture birds to lure wild birds on to their property where they are shot. One landowner says he kills one a week. Estimates of kea populations in South Island range from 1000 to 5000 individuals.

Forest and Bird, 17, 1.

Oceania

Dolphin kill may stop tuna fishing

A ban on tuna fishing by the US fishing fleet in the eastern tropical Pacific seemed likely this year when by 30 June over 16,000 dolphins had been drowned in seine nets. The legal annual limit, under the 1984 Marine Mammal Protection Act, is 20,500.

Fishing News International, 25, 7.

Tonga stops whale hunt

Whaling in Tonga is a small operation, but the humpback whale *Megaptera novaeangliae* population on which it depends may be as low as 2500. The International Whaling Commission declared it a protected species in 1964 and began to exert pressure on Tonga to stop the whaling. The Tongan Government has recently responded by declaring a moratorium on whaling for one year and has offered compensation to the Cook family, which carries out the yearly hunt from June to September when the females and calves are return-

ing from their northern breeding grounds to the Antarctic feeding grounds.

Fishing News International, June 1986.

Requests

Call for researchers

There is an immediate and long-term opportunity for researchers interested in tropical montane ecology, conservation biology, animal behaviour, botany, climatology, hydrology, and related subjects to work at the Karisoke Research Centre in Rwanda, Central Africa. Interested applicants should address a brief letter of inquiry and curriculum vitae to: P. Stacey Coil, President, The Digit Fund, PO Box 25, Ithaca, NY 14851, USA.

People

The International Primate Protection League has prepared a commemorative issue of its newsletter in honour of Dian Fossey, who was killed in December 1985 in her 'cabin' in Rwanda. Free copies of *Dian Fossey 1932-1985* are available from IPPL, PO Box 766, Summerville, SC 29484, USA.

Henry and Jean de Heulme have been awarded the 1985 J. Paul Getty Wildlife Conservation Prize for their work to preserve Madagascar's wildlife. The father-son team is being recognized particularly for its efforts to establish a new 40-sq-km nature reserve at Analabe on the south-west coast.

The Ecuadoreans leading the effort for the conservation of the Galápagos have been given WWF International's Award for Conservation Merit. They are: Dr Eugenia del Pino, a teacher at the Catholic University of Quito, who was the first professor to involve Ecuadorean students in the conservation programme; Miguel Cifuentes, Director of the Galápagos National Park, and Juan Black Maldonado, who worked to promote the Galápagos as an area to be preserved.

Obituary

George J. Wallace, noted ornithologist and an emeritus professor of Michigan State University, died in March. He was one of the first scientists to call attention

to the impact of DDT on the environment.

Bird Watcher's Digest, May/June 1986.

Conferences

Birds of Prey Conference

The Third World Conference on Birds of Prey will be held from 22-27 March 1987 at Eilat, Israel. It will be organized by the World Working Group on Birds of Prey of the ICBP in conjunction with the Israel Raptor Information Centre and the US Hawk Mountain Sanctuary Association. Further information is available from Mr R. D. Chancellor, 15 Bolton Gardens, London SW5 0AL, UK.

Corrections

Nubian ibex

The editor regrets the error on page 177 of the July issue of *Oryx* when a photograph of a markhor *Capra falconeri* was used instead of the intended photograph of the Nubian ibex.

Transposed captions

In Richard Lewis's article, 'A rain-forest raptor in danger' in the July 1986 issue of *Oryx*, two captions were inadvertently transposed: page 173 'A female imprinted eagle' and page 174 'A confiscated eagle being released back to the wild with a radio transmitter attached to its tail'. The editor apologizes for the error.

Snow leopards in Ladakh

On page 124 of the April issue of *Oryx* it was stated that 200 snow leopards had been sighted in Ladakh according to a survey by naturalist Brig. Moti Dar. The 200 in fact referred to an estimate based upon Brig. Dar's natural history observations during his tour of duty in Ladakh and not on a systematic survey. The Indian and US Governments are conducting a survey of the status of snow leopards and their prey in north-western India, including parts of Ladakh. The survey was due for completion in July 1986 and the results will be reported at the Fifth International Snow Leopard Symposium to be held in Srinagar, Kashmir, India, from 13-18 October 1986.

Joseph L. Fox, *International Snow Leopard Trust*.

Oryx Vol 20 No 4, October 1986