

# Briefly . . .

## International

### 86 for World Heritage Convention

The Dominican Republic and Sweden have adhered to the World Heritage Convention, bringing the membership to 86 countries.

*CNPPA Members' Newsletter*, 30.

### Two more join CITES

On 25 April 1985, the Spanish Senate ratified CITES with a reservation to Appendix I listing of the fin whale, which will be effective only until 1 January 1986 when the IWC moratorium on commercial whaling begins. Honduras became the 88th Party to CITES on 13 June, and Hungary became the 89th on 27 August 1985.

Briefing for IWC Commissioners, April 1985

*TRAFFIC (USA)*, 6, 2.

*TRAFFIC Bulletin*, VII, 2.

### Ireland joins Ramsar Convention

Ireland joined the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (Ramsar Convention) on 15 November 1984 and nominated North Slob, a 110-ha (270-acre) portion of the Wexford Wildlife Reserve, County Wexford, for the List of Wetlands of International Importance. There are now more than 300 sites covering approximately 20 million ha (50 million acres) on the List. *IUCN Bulletin*, 16, 1-3.

### Convention to protect seas

Saudi Arabia was the fourth state to ratify the Regional Convention for the Conservation of the Red Sea and the Gulf of Aden, which came into effect in July 1985. The convention applies to the Red Sea, Gulf of Aqaba, Gulf of Suez, Suez Canal and Gulf of Aden, and establishes an organization to prevent, monitor and control pollution from Saudi Arabia, North Yemen, South Yemen, Jordan, Sudan and Somalia. *New Scientist*, 23 May 1985.

### Tropical Timber Agreement

The International Tropical Timber Agreement was ratified on 31 March 1985 by 14 consumer and 12 producer

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countries. The pact, whose details were agreed in principle at the UN Conference on Tropical Timber in November 1983, provides a framework for co-operation between producers and consumers of tropical timber. The consumers: France, UK, Germany, Italy, Belgium-Luxembourg, Netherlands, Greece, Ireland, Denmark, Norway, Sweden, Finland, Japan and Egypt. The producers: Gabon, Indonesia, Malaysia, Liberia, Ecuador, Peru, Honduras, Brazil, Congo, Philippines, Ivory Coast, Thailand.

*Earthscan Bulletin*, 8, 2.

### To Save the Seashore Birds

An agreement was signed in London on 11 June 1985 by the High Commissioner of Ghana and the ICBP and the RSPB. It is the first bilateral agreement to protect migratory birds in European-African flyways, and is focussed particularly on the roseate tern *Sterna dougallii*, whose numbers have declined to 580 pairs in Europe. The 'Save the Seashore Birds' project will provide training for Ghanaians, equipment for bird surveys and resources for conservation work.

*ICBP/RSPB*.

### A new Biosphere Reserve

The Cévennes National Park has become France's third Biosphere Reserve. *Council of Europe Newsletter*, 85-3.

### Captive rhino deaths

Two of the black rhinos taken to a Texas ranch for captive breeding have died (see *Oryx*, January 1985, page 40). Both had a severe gum disease, as yet unidentified.

*Audubon*, 87, 3.

### Progress in panda breeding

A new technique for artificially inseminating pandas involves an operating telescope to implant sperm directly into the uterus without the need for surgery. *The Times*, 27 May 1985.

### Gemsbok birth a first

On 7 March 1985, a gemsbok *Oryx gazella* gave birth to a calf conceived after artificial insemination, the first gemsbok to do so.

*AAZPA Newsletter*, XXVI, 4.

### Rare python bred

The Papuan python *Liasis papuanus* has been bred for the first time in captivity at Knoxville Zoological Park in the US. Of a total of 22 eggs laid, 10 young survived. Previously, only four individuals were known in captivity, three in the US.

*AAZPA Newsletter*, XXVI, 3.

## Europe and North Africa

### EEC to aid conservationist farmers

Farmers who take measures to protect wildlife will soon be able to benefit from special national aid in EEC member states that choose to implement environmental programmes for 'sensitive' agricultural areas.

*Council of Europe Newsletter*, 85-4.

### Kangaroo campaign

Greenpeace launched a campaign on 11 June 1985 to stop the import of kangaroo hides into the EEC, in protest at the unnecessary slaughter of about two million kangaroos. Europe imports 64 per cent of Australia's kangaroo products; in 1984 Britain alone imported nearly 30,000 kg of skins, mainly for football boots.

### Ancient juniper discovered

Russian scientists have discovered a species of juniper in the central part of the Tien Shan Mountains that they believe was previously known only from one-million-year-old fossils.

*GNUS*, 10 May 1985.

### Siberian tiger success

The conservation effort for the Siberian tiger *Panthera tigris altaica* has resulted in about 200 in the Ussuri region of the Soviet Union, compared with 20-30 in the 1930s. However, new conservation measures are now needed to ensure the continued peaceful coexistence of man and tigers. One solution under consideration is to create a network of protected territories that are large enough for the tigers and are linked by corridors; undeveloped forestry and hunting lands have been set aside for this.

*BBC Wildlife*, 3, 5.

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## Leopards need help in USSR

A census of leopards *Panthera pardus* in the Soviet Far East carried out in 1983–84 revealed that there are no longer leopards in the north-west of the range, but in the south-west numbers remain unchanged since the last census 10 years ago. Of the 25–30 individuals found, 12–16 are permanently resident in USSR territory and they need additional protection measures. *Zoologicheskyy Zhurnal*, LXIV, 6.

## Walrus recolonization

The Pacific walrus *Odobenus rosmarus divergens* has recently recolonized the Kamchatka Peninsula in the Soviet Far East, where it was eliminated by hunting at the end of the last century. Walrus hunting is now banned, and no one is allowed to go near the walrus breeding sites. *GNUS*, 7 June 1985.

## Woodpecker on the way out?

It is feared that the white-backed woodpecker *Picoides leucotus* in Sweden will meet the same fate as the middle-spotted woodpecker *P. medius*, which became extinct there in 1982. The population fell from 100 to 50 pairs between 1970 and 1982 due to the disappearance of deciduous forest, but it is hoped that the new broadleaf woodland legislation will help reverse the decline. Government and private bodies and individuals are marking 250,000 old hollow trees to ensure that they are left. *Council of Europe Newsletter*, 85–4.

## Decision ends Swedish forest conflict

The Swedish Government has decided that three tracts of virgin mountain forest covering 248,000 ha (612,800 acres) in the Storuman area should be protected. This decision ends a 2-year conflict between the National Swedish Environment Protection Board and the Directorate of Crown Forests. *Council of Europe Newsletter*, 85–4.

## Sweden's lynx to be protected again?

Sweden's National Environment Protection Board is considering a ban on

lynx *Felis lynx* hunting, and suggests that the species be totally protected, as it was between 1927 and 1942. *Council of Europe Newsletter*, 85–3.

## Sweden allows cormorant hunt

The Swedish National Environment Protection Board has given permission to hunt cormorants *Phalacrocorax carbo* because they are considered an inconvenience to fishing. Conservationists are protesting that hunting is a threat to the survival of the species in Sweden; 1500 pairs nest in two colonies in Kalmarsund. Cormorants re-established in the country in the 1940s, having become extinct there at the end of the 19th century. *Sveriges Natur*, June 1985.

## Egg thieves fined in Iceland

Two Germans found in possession of eight gyrfalcon *Falco rusticolus* eggs were given suspended prison sentences and fined the equivalent of £11,000 with £900 costs in Iceland. *Birds*, 10, 6.

## UK Wildlife Act amended

The UK Wildlife and Countryside (Amendment) Bill was passed in June after its third reading in Parliament and was given the Royal Assent. The amendments strengthen badger protection and close the loophole that allowed SSSIs to be damaged while awaiting full designation. There is regret among conservationists that amendment clauses relating to marine reserves, forestry and the duties of agricultural ministers had been deleted. *GNUS*, 28 June 1985.

## Are dolphinaria justified?

The UK Government is to hold a review of dolphinaria and marine parks to establish whether their educational, research and breeding benefits are sufficient to justify the import and display of live cetaceans. *Department of the Environment*, 6 June 1985.

## UK NNRs up by five

The Nature Conservancy Council declared five new national nature reserves between April and July 1985:

Dunnet Link in Caithness, a dune and grassland system; Blar nam Faileag in Caithness, a 600-year-old peat bog; Gragbank Wood, the largest remaining fragment of ancient deciduous woodland in the Borders; Pevensey Levels, 16 ha (40 acres) of grazing marshes in East Sussex; and Castle Eden Dene, 200 ha (490 acres) of wooded limestone ravine on the Durham coast. *Nature Conservancy Council*.

## Grey seals safe in future

The Secretary of State for Scotland has announced that there will be no culling of grey seals *Halichoerus grypus* in Scotland until further notice; research has shown that seals have a minimal effect on fisheries. *Scottish Office News Release*, 13 May 1985.

## Duich Moss: a habitat lost through error

The European Commission wrote at least twice to the UK Government asking it to safeguard Duich Moss, which, as habitat of Greenland white-fronted geese *Anser albifrons flavirostris*, should be protected under the EEC directive on the conservation of wild birds. The requests were not passed on to the Scottish Secretary because of an administrative error and he gave permission for a local distillery to extract peat, thus ruining the site.

## Reprieve for golden eagle

The NCC has advised against the issue of a licence to Glenelg Fox Club on behalf of local farmers to kill a golden eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* in Scotland. Although eagles have killed some lambs, the main causes of lamb losses are foxes, disease and bad weather. The NCC is continuing survey work and is appointing an officer to monitor eagles next lambing season. The golden eagle is protected under the Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981), but can be killed under special licence. There are 424 pairs in Britain—18–20 per cent of the European population. *Nature Conservancy Council*.

## Gizzards stuffed with plastic

Examination of Leach's petrels, Manx shearwaters and fulmars from Scottish

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colonies revealed plastic particles in their gizzards. In most of the contaminated birds, the volume of plastic was equivalent to 59 per cent of relaxed gizzard volume.

*Marine Pollution Bulletin*, 16, 3.

## Historic hatching

Four pairs of white-tailed sea eagles *Haliaeetus albicilla* nested on the Scottish island of Rhum, and at the time of writing (20 June 1985) chicks had hatched in one nest, the first hatching in Scotland since 1916. The reintroduction project has reached its final stage with the arrival of the last batch of chicks from Norway.

*GNUS*, 21 June 1985.

## Traditional grazing scheme welcomed by farmers

The experimental Broads Grazing Conservation Scheme on Halvergate Marshes in Norfolk, where farmers were invited to maintain traditional grazing meadows in return for annual payments of £50 per acre (not £5 per acre as reported in the July 1985 *Oryx*, page 169) has received 111 applications. Nearly 95 per cent of the estimated eligible marshes have been entered into the scheme.

*GNUS*, 21 June 1985.

## Landowner kills orchids

The owner of a meadow rich in orchids and other plants at West Mersea, Essex, UK, had it sprayed with weedkiller under cover of darkness while it was the subject of an emergency claim for protection under the UK Wildlife and Countryside Act (1981). The Secretary of State for the Environment has called for an investigation.

## Carp, moths and mitten crabs

At Wessex Water Authority's laboratories in Dorset, Siberian grass-eating carp are being bred for introduction into waterways to clear weed. The Agriculture and Food Council is spending £44,000 on research into the feasibility of introducing silver-spangled brown moths from South Africa into Britain to control the spread of bracken. Meanwhile, Chinese mitten crabs *Eriocheir sinensis* may be establishing in Britain; 19 have been recorded from the

Humber to the Thames since 1976. The crabs have colonized continental Europe since 1912, having reached there, it is believed, in ships' ballast tanks.

*Sunday Times*, 2 June 1985; *Guardian*, 4 May 1985; *Sunday Telegraph*, 28 April 1985.

## Barn owls back in London

Five young barn owls *Tyto alba* were released in London in June in a joint Greater London Council/Wildlife Hospital Trust attempt to re-establish the species in the capital, from which it had been absent for 10 years.

*GNUS*, 7 June 1985.

## Belgium says 'yes' to falconers

In the Walloon region of Belgium, a Ministerial Order issued on 25 March 1985 made it legal for falconers to take young birds of prey from their nests. It runs counter to all international regulations protecting birds of prey.

*Council of Europe Newsletter*, 85–5.

## Luxembourg protects frogs, bats and others

Luxembourg has introduced a new regulation to protect fully all indigenous reptiles and amphibians—except for the edible and common frog *Rana esculenta* and *R. temporaria*—10 species of fish, most birds, many insects, bats, hedgehogs, moles, dormice, wild cats, otters and badgers.

*Council of Europe Newsletter*, 85–4.

## Action needed for monk seal

Fewer than 500 Mediterranean monk seals *Monachus monachus* remain, mainly in Greek or Turkish waters. They may well be facing extinction unless an immediate effort is made to protect them throughout the north-east Atlantic, the Mediterranean and the Black Sea. The Madeira Government is considering proposals from conservationists for a reserve at Ilhas Desertas, where six to eight monk seals remain. The European Parliament asked for everything possible to be done to save monk seals in Europe, including allocating a sum in the next budget.

*Newsletter of the League for the Conservation of the Monk Seal*, 8.

*Council of Europe Newsletter*, 85–4.

## Farmers fight eucalyptus scheme

Portugal's small farmers are resisting attempts to persuade them to grow eucalyptus trees, which, although fast-growing, dry out the soil.

*GNUS*, 21 June 1985.

## Wolves have support in Portugal

A Wolf Conservation Campaign has been launched in Portugal by a group that has the support of most of the conservation organizations in the country. Only 100–200 wolves remain in Portugal, and they are threatened by hunting, trapping and poisoning.

*Organizing Committee, Wolf Conservation Campaign, Portugal*.

## New park for vultures and ibex

The Andalusian Government in Spain has established the Sierra de Grazalema Nature Park to the north-west of the Cadiz and Malaga Provinces. Its 47,120 ha (116,430 acres) include 300 ha (740 acres) of *Abies pinsapo*, a very rare forest type. There are large populations of griffon vulture *Gyps fulvus* and Spanish ibex *Capra pyrenaica*.

*Council of Europe Newsletter*, 85–4.

## Effort for vultures

In an effort to save the last remaining European black vulture *Aegypius monachus* population in Andalusia in Spain, a nature conservancy association, Andalus, has succeeded in stopping the eucalyptus planting that was threatening critical habitat. The association has also decided to buy the Finca Estate at the heart of the vultures' breeding zone.

*Council of Europe Newsletter*, 85–3.

## Endangered deer gets forest

The Corsican red deer *Cervus elaphus corsicanus* became extinct in Corsica in 1979 and only 200–300 survive in Sardinia. The deer is being systematically poached, and to protect it WWF-Italy is buying a 2911-ha (7913-acre) reserve on Mounts Arcosa and Lattias in southern Sardinia, near Cagliari.

*WWF News*, 35.

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## Hunters devastating Malta's seabirds

Shooting seabirds for sport is increasing rapidly in Malta with the use of motorized rubber dinghies that can outstrip birds in flight. Enormous numbers of birds are being killed, including rare species: the last pair of breeding peregrines *Falco peregrinus* at Ta'Cenc Cliffs and the male of a pair of short-eared owls *Asio flammeus* trying to breed on the Islet of Comino were killed in this way.

*World Birdwatch*, 7, 1.

## Hermit ibis in trouble

All is not going well for the Turkish Government's captive-breeding effort for the hermit ibis *Geronticus eremita*. Since it began in 1977, 34 birds have been released but only 11 have joined the wild population, maybe because they were released too late to adapt to the wild before they migrated. In 1984, only seven chicks survived; others, with deformed beaks, died. Project modifications have now been made. The total wild population is now 20 (compared with 28 in 1983) and the total in captivity is 24 (29 in 1983).

*World Birdwatch*, 7, 1.

## Halt in cyclamen imports

In response to alarm that cyclamens are being overcollected in the wild in Turkey, the EEC has decided that import permits should not normally be granted by any of its member states at present for commercial quantities of Turkish cyclamens. The European Commission has asked the Turkish authorities to provide information on the conservation status of cyclamen species in their country.

*UK Department of the Environment*.

## Protected areas for Cyprus

Cyprus has established its first two woodland national parks. One, near Cape Greco, covers 89 ha (220 acres) and is important for migrating birds. The second, covering 45 ha (110 acres) near Nicosia, is to serve mainly as a recreational area. The Government has also declared its first nature reserve: covering 892 ha (2204 acres) in the Paphos area, it should protect mouflon *Ovis musimon* and Cyprus cedar *Cedrus brevifolia*.

*Council of Europe Newsletter*, 85–5.

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## Cyprus bans bird-catching

All bird-catching has been banned in Cyprus, and there is already evidence to indicate that bird populations are recovering.

*Council of Europe Newsletter*, 85–5.

## Africa

### Dam causing coast to crumble

The Akosombo Dam on the River Volta in Ghana is the prime cause of massive erosion of Togo's coast, where the sea has advanced 135 m (440 ft) since 1980. The dam holds back sediment that was previously deposited in the Gulf of Guinea, where it compensated for the erosive action of the waves. Towns, plantations and Togo's main wharf are threatened and the erosion is moving westwards to Benin and Lagos.

*Africa Now*, April 1985.

### CAR bans elephant hunting

The Central African Republic has now banned elephant hunting. The country's efforts to implement CITES and to enforce its own quota on elephant killing led to a reduction in ivory exports in 1984 to about 20 per cent of the level in 1982.

*TRAFFIC Bulletin*, VII, 2.

### Uganda gets help for Parks

The EEC has pledged to give Uganda US\$2.2 million to help the Government rehabilitate Queen Elizabeth, Murchison Falls and Kidepo National Parks.

*WWF News*, 35.

### Drought affecting Grevy's zebra

A top-priority project to discover the migration routes and dry-season ranges of Grevy's zebra *Equus grevyi* is suffering from a shortage of funds. It is known, however, that the severe drought in northern Kenya is affecting the species; Samburu nomads are blocking the animals' access to water-holes, resulting in new distribution patterns for wildlife.

*IUCN Bulletin*, 16, 1–3.

### Kenya rounds up rhinos

In order to save the last of Kenya's black rhinos from poachers, the Government has decided to transfer them to four

heavily guarded sanctuaries surrounded by electric fences. The first of these is being established at Lake Nakuru National Park, which can sustain about 40 rhinos.

*New York Times*, 12 May 1985.

### Introduced fish ruin fisheries

Fish-eating Nile perch, introduced as a fisheries experiment in Lake Victoria, have spread so quickly that almost all the indigenous fisheries of commercial importance have declined, some almost completely. There are 200 species of cichlid fish in the Lake.

*Earthscan*, June 1985.

### Search for oil in African lake

American oil companies are planning to carry out exploratory oil drilling in the Zambian waters of Lake Tanganyika in the near future. Conservationists are concerned because the closed lake system, which has a large number of endemic fish, would be very vulnerable to oil contamination.

*Habitat*, 21, 7.

### Zimbabwe's rhinos safe no longer

Africa's second largest population of black rhinos in Zimbabwe's Middle Zambezi Valley, once considered safe because of its remoteness, is the target for ivory poaching gangs now that rhinos have been almost exterminated elsewhere. In early 1985, 18 hornless carcasses were found; since then, eight Zambians have been arrested and several high-powered firearms and a quantity of rhino horn have been confiscated. Parks staff have been reinforced by police, but more anti-poaching units are needed. In 1984, the Zimbabwean Department of National Parks moved 50 black rhinos into more easily protected areas, like the Hwange National Park, and plans more translocations.

*BBC Wildlife*, 3, 5.

### Fences cause problems for kudu

Kudu *Tragelaphus strepsiceros* deaths in fenced game reserves in the Transvaal have been attributed to plant tannins, which prevent digestive

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Kudu does (Hugh Cressy-Hall).

enzymes working. Leaves of some trees can increase their tannin content by 94 per cent 15 minutes after being thrashed (to simulate kudu browsing). This reaction, which presumably protects the remaining leaves, is followed by a reduction in tannin levels to normal after 50–100 hours. Unrestricted kudu never feed for long in one place and are thus unaffected by this strategy, but in confined areas they browse individual trees so frequently that tannin levels remain high.

*BBC Wildlife*, 3, 5.

### Vultures need help

The bearded vulture *Gypaetus barbatus* is the subject of a new colour booklet published by the Endangered Wildlife Trust of South Africa. There are 30 pairs in the Natal Drakensberg, with perhaps another 200 pairs in other parts of Southern Africa. The most important cause of mortality is accidental poisoning, and the booklet urges farmers to avoid using poison against jackals and to leave carcasses of animals that have died from non-contagious causes to provide food for the birds.

### Rare protea at risk from an ant

The Argentine ant, introduced to South Africa at the turn of the century, is threatening the future of a rare endemic protea *Mimetes cucullatus*. The plant produces only a few seeds each year, which are made attractive to ants by having protein-rich elaiosomes attached

to them. Native ants drag back the seeds to their nests, chew off the elaiosomes and leave the buried seed to grow. Argentine ants, now invading the protea's habitat, simply bite off the elaiosome and discard the seed on the ground.

*New Scientist*, 1447.

### Mauritius kestrel increasing

The ICBP-sponsored Mauritius kestrel *Falco punctatus* captive-breeding programme reported seven chicks in 1985, two from wild-collected eggs. There are now at least 16 resident pairs in the wild.

*World Birdwatch*, 7, 1.

### Asia (excluding Indo-Malaya)

#### Ancient cypresses threatened

In April, the Jordan Royal Society for the Conservation of Nature held a day of vigilance to draw attention to the threats to a group of about 70 Italian cypresses *Cupressus sempervirens*, which are around 2000 years old and threatened by the activities of the South Cement Factory.

*Al-Reem*, 19.

### Jordan: more wildlife releases

Three ostriches *Struthio camelus* obtained from Oklahoma Zoo, USA, in late 1983 were released into the Shaumari Wildlife Reserve in April 1985 by the Jordan Royal Society for the

Conservation of Nature. The birds are the same subspecies that inhabited the Jordanian desert before 1964 when they became extinct. Three Arabian or white oryx *Oryx leucoryx* were born in Shaumari in March 1985, bringing the total herd to 41.

*Al-Reem*, 19.

### New fish in China

Two new species of shark, *Atripturus abbreviatus* and *Centrothorus robustus*, have been described by scientists of the Dong Sea Fisheries Institute in Shanghai. They were caught during a survey of the Dong Sea in early 1985. An eyeless species of barbel has been discovered in an underground stream in south-west China and has been provisionally named the eyeless scaleless barbel.

*Xinhua*, 4 May and 15 June 1985.

### Elephant herds increase in China

In Yunnan Province, at least 230 elephants now live in Xishuangbanna Reserve and Nangunhe Reserve. Until a few years ago, elephants had been retreating from the area because of large-scale tree felling.

*Xinhua*, 28 March 1985.

### Rhesus monkey boom

In Jiyuan County Reserve in Henan Province, China, which was set up in 1982 to protect rhesus monkeys *Macaca mulatta*, numbers of the monkeys have risen from 700 in 1982 to more than 1800. The 753-ha (1860-acre) mountain reserve provides ideal climatic conditions, and the provincial



Bearded vulture (Endangered Wildlife Trust of South Africa).

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government distributes supplementary food in winter and spring. *Xinhua*, 3 May 1985.

## Mice additions in China

A new genus and species of dormouse (Family *Gliridae*) has been described from Wang-lang Nature Reserve in Northern Sichuan, China. *Chaetocauda sichuanensis* lives in mixed subalpine forest. A new species of pencil-tailed tree mouse, collected in 1981 from Yunnan Province in China, has just been described. *Chiropodomys jingdongensis* differs from other members of the genus in size, colour and in having more plentiful and larger hairs on the end half of its tail. *Acta Theriologica Sinica*, **5**, 1, and **4**, 3.

## New anti-malarial drug from plant

The active substance of *Artemisia annua* has been isolated; known as quinghaosu (QHS), it offers a totally new class of anti-malarial drugs. The Chinese have used the plant for centuries as a treatment for fever and malaria. *Science*, 31 May 1985.

## Drugs company plans captive-breeding

The Chinese Crude Drugs Company, which is short of raw materials now that its sources are officially protected, plans to raise tigers, bears, leopards, snakes and other animals in captivity in order to use them to make medicines. One of those most in demand is a treatment for rheumatoid arthritis, made from tiger bones. The company has asked pharmaceutical departments and zoos to cooperate in exchange for a share in the profits. *BBC Wildlife*, **3**, 6.

## Chinese horse and camel survey

The results of a 3-year (1981–83) survey in western China, organized by the Chinese Academy of Sciences, have confirmed that the Przewalski horse *Equus przewalskii* no longer survives in the study area, and that the population of bactrian camels *Camelus bactrianus* has been reduced to approximately 2000. At a symposium in early 1985, it

was agreed that the only existing possibility of wild horses remaining in China would be along the sensitive Sino–Mongolian border. The symposium also expressed China's interest in reintroducing the wild horse into appropriate natural habitats. There was no agreement about the causes of the camel's endangerment, but the symposium did agree on the need for protection, and made initial steps towards the establishment of a wildlife reserve for bactrian camels. The symposium also organized a group of Chinese ungulate specialists, chaired by Professor Wang Song, to promote the development of research in this field. *Bill Clark*.

## Taiwan bans tiger imports

Taiwan has banned imports of tigers *Panthera tigris*. The move follows the recent slaughter of scores of tigers and the sale of their meat in markets. Taiwan has no laws protecting wildlife, and the Government is being pressed by the country's Ecological Preservation Association to remedy this. *The Animal Welfare Institute Quarterly*, **34**, 1. *The Times*, 8 June 1985.

## Taiwan moves to protect coast

In 1984, the newly formed National Parks Department of Taiwan was given responsibility for implementing a coastal zone protection programme for seven areas. The objectives are to maintain environmental quality, to conserve natural resources and to protect significant features, including wildlife. The areas include important stopping places for migratory birds. *Tigerpaper*, **VII**, 1.

## Bear business in Korea

South Korean businessmen have imported 35 frozen bears, reportedly hunted in the Rockies of North America, according to the Korea Herald. The gallbladders alone were being sold for US\$18,300. *Parade Magazine*, 26 May 1985.

## Japanese mudflats should be sanctuary

Two ornithologists have strongly recommended that tidal flats at Yatsu,

Narashino-shi, Chiba Prefecture in Japan be designated as a bird sanctuary. Of the 170 species recorded there between 1975 and 1983, some of the dominant waders are Kentish plover *Charadrius alexandrinus*, Mongolian plover *C. mongolus*, grey plover *Pluvius squatarola* and rufous-necked stint *Calidris ruficollis*. *Strix*, **3**, 1984.

## Indo-Malaya

### Multi-purpose plan for Annapurna

An international campaign has been launched to establish the Annapurna region of Nepal as a special conservation area. The plan, which would cover 500 sq miles (1300 sq km) surrounding Annapurna I, is being developed by the WWF and has been endorsed by the King Mahendra Trust for Nature Conservation. It will combine wildlife protection with measures to improve the quality of life of the local people. *WWF–US*, 9 May 1985.

### Tigers still increasing

The 1984 tiger census in India revealed 3994 tigers, compared with 3015 in 1979, of which 121 are in 15 special tiger reserves and 674 are in other protected areas. *SSC Newsletter*, **5**.

### Towards a cleaner Ganges

India is to spend the equivalent of £180 million over the next 5 years on the first phase of cleaning up the 2500-km (1550-mile) Ganges River. *Nature*, 30 May 1985 (GNUS).

### Environmentalists win Indian court case

The inhabitants of Doon Valley in the Himalayas won a court case against the limestone industry in March 1985. In India's first major environmental case, the Supreme Court ruled that 53 out of 60 limestone quarries were to be shut down. The quarrying had been destroying the hillside and had begun to destabilize the hydrological balance of the valley. *Ambio*, **XIV**, 3.

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## Siberian crane numbers best for years

The December 1984 count of Siberian cranes *Grus leucogeranus* in Keoladeo National Park in Bharatpur, India, revealed 41 birds, of which eight were young. This is the best number for many years.

*World Birdwatch*, 7, 1.

## 3000 milky storks

An ICBP-sponsored survey of coastal south-east Sumatra, which is still covered by mangroves and mudflats, revealed 100,000 waders of 22 species, including 3000 milky storks *Mycteria cinerea*, formerly estimated at about 1000 worldwide. The survey pointed to the area's importance as a vital link in the Eastern Palearctic flyway and as a breeding ground for species previously believed to be on the brink of extinction. Reclamation and logging threaten this coast, but there is hope in that the Indonesian Government is reportedly preparing to accede to the Ramsar Convention, and the Indonesian Nature Conservation Agency is interested in setting aside key coastal areas in the region.

*World Birdwatch*, 7, 1.

## Rare duck found in Sumatran forest

A small population of white-winged wood duck *Cairina scutulata* has been discovered in the Padang-Sugihan Wildlife Reserve in southern Sumatra, Indonesia. The duck was once widespread in South East Asia; now, only small numbers are known from Assam, Burma, Bangladesh and parts of Indonesia. The duck is protected by a 1972 Indonesian Government decree, but the habitat of the newly discovered population is threatened by illegal logging and human disturbance.

*WWF Monthly Report*, May 1985.

## Captive breeding for Sumatran rhinos

Britain is to help Indonesia capture eight Sumatran rhinoceroses *Dicerorhinus sumatrensis* for national zoos in both countries in an effort to prevent their extinction.

*GNUS*, May 1985.

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## Javan rhino numbers fall

The April 1984 census of the Javan rhinoceros *Rhinoceros sondaicus* in its last stronghold, Ujung Kulon in western Java, revealed 50–54 individuals, a substantial drop from previous years, which might have been caused by the five deaths from unknown causes in 1981–82. Three poachers were arrested in March 1985 for killing a rhino in Ujung Kulon in December 1984. The horn, which would have fetched US\$4000 on the black market, was confiscated.

*WWF Monthly Report*, March 1985.

## North America

### Contaminated bears

Traces of heavy metals and pesticides have been found in the livers of 70 polar bears *Thalarctos maritimus* killed by Eskimos in the Arctic. The contaminants included polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), dioxins and insecticide residues.

*The Philadelphia Inquirer*, 8 May 1985.

### Plan to rid islands of foxes

The US Fish and Wildlife Service is proposing a 3-year experimental programme to remove Arctic foxes *Alopex lagopus* from Kiska Island in the Aleutian Islands using Compound 1080, which is highly toxic to foxes, but less so to birds. Fur traders introduced the foxes to these previously predator-free islands during the last century. The

foxes had a devastating effect on the native birds: the Aleutian Canada goose *Branta canadensis leucopareia* was extirpated from all except two islands that remained fox-free.

*Endangered Species Technical Bulletin*, X, 4.

### Alaska bans bear hunting

The Alaska State Game Board has banned the hunting of bears and the sale of bear gallbladders and paws, which have been sold openly in Anchorage for thousands of dollars.

*TRAFFIC Bulletin*, VII, 1.

### Concern over oil drilling

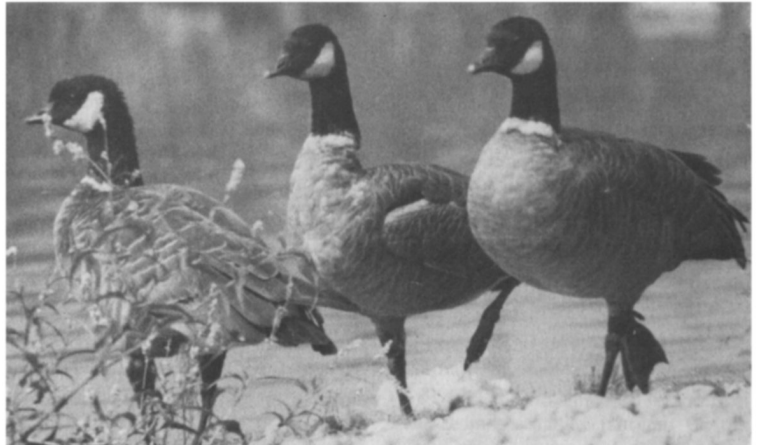
Fishermen from California to Alaska are increasingly concerned about the possible effects of oil drilling. Prospective oil fields lie on the Pacific salmon's migration routes, and oil and gas development in the Bering Sea could threaten rich crab fisheries.

*Fishing News International*, 24, 4.

### No licence to track wolves for killing

The US Federal Communications Commission (FCC), which licenses radio telemetry equipment, has stopped state game managers in Alaska from using radio telemetry to track wolves in order to shoot them from aircraft. The FCC asserts that the equipment was meant for biological research only.

*GNUS*, 83.



Aleutian Canada geese.

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## Budget cuts for wildlife work

Cuts of 60 per cent in the Canadian Wildlife Service's 1985/86 budget meant that 84 of 370 permanent staff lost their jobs, and many projects concerning endangered species have been terminated.

*Not Man Apart*, June 1985.

## Not so much DDT in seals

Analysis of the blubber of grey seals *Halichoerus grypus* from the Sable Isles, Nova Scotia, has shown that DDT residues were lower in 1982 than in 1974 and 1976. This is the first evidence to indicate that DDT—group residues in high trophic level marine animals have responded to the DDT ban of the 1970s.

*Marine Pollution Bulletin*, 16, 3.

## Caribou deaths blamed on Corporation

More than 10,000 caribou *Rangifer tarandus* deaths in September 1984 (reported in the April 1985 issue of *Oryx*, page 115) were due to Hydro-Quebec, public utility arm of the James Bay Development Corporation, emptying huge amounts of water into the riverbed from a reservoir, says a report by the Quebec government office responsible for native affairs.

*Guardian*, 21 June 1985.

## New conservation biology society

Two-hundred participants at the Second Conference on Conservation Biology held at the University of Michigan in May decided to launch a new society devoted to conservation biology. They want to raise the priority given to conservation biology in national research programmes, particularly in the US, and call for funding from the National Science Foundation and for more training. Professor Michael Soulé will probably be the first president.

*New Scientist*, 16 May 1985.

## Steel shot zone extended

Portions of 30 states of the US, including 59 national wildlife refuges, have been designated as non-toxic (steel) shot zones for the 1985–86 waterfowl

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hunting season by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Some areas have been added to the list for the first time, specifically to protect bald eagles from poisoning.

*Department of the Interior*, 21 February 1985.

## Pollution study

The US National Marine Fisheries Service has set up an Estuarine Programs Office to study the effects of pollution on marine life in Chesapeake Bay, Buzzard Bay, Puget Sound and other areas.

*Fishing News International*, 24, 4.

## Wildlife smuggler gets 15 years

The ringleader of the wildlife smuggling ring broken by federal undercover agents in 1984 in Montana has been found guilty on seven charges of killing and selling protected wildlife and acting as a guide on out-of-season hunts. He received a 15-year prison sentence.

*Animal Welfare Institute Quarterly*, 34, 1.

## Irrigation scheme modified for wildlife

The controversial Garrison Diversion Project to irrigate farmland in Dakota has been modified so that it will be less damaging to wildlife: Lonetree Dam and Reservoir will not be constructed, thereby preserving Sheyenne National Wildlife Refuge; 15,425 ha (38,115 acres) rather than 28,329 ha (70,000 acres) will be altered, and valuable wildlife habitat must be replaced on an acre-for-acre basis.

*Conservation*, 85, 3, 1.

## Threatened plant has only three populations

The Blue Ridge goldenrod *Solidago spithamaea* has been listed by the US Fish and Wildlife Service as threatened. Habitat disturbance resulting from recreational development and use has reduced it to three populations, two on private land in Avery County, North Carolina, and one in a national forest on the border between Mitchell County, North Carolina, and Carter County, Tennessee.

*Endangered Species Technical Bulletin*, X, 4.

## Otters back in Missouri

River otters *Lutra canadensis*, once abundant in all Missouri's watersheds, were brought to virtual extinction in 1937 by trapping. A reintroduction programme was started in 1982 using otters from Louisiana, and now about 200 otters have been released. No breeding has yet been recorded, but Missouri plans to expand the programme.

*Missouri Conservationist*, 46, 3.

## Sea otters get more help

New legislation passed on 25 May 1985 extended an existing ban on large-mesh nets being used in water less than 15 m (49 ft) deep in Monterey Bay to the entire range of the California sea otter *Enhydra lutris nereis*. More than 1000 sea otters are estimated to have drowned in nets in the past decade. The census in April and May 1985 revealed 1124 independent otters and 236 dependent pups, the highest number of pups for six years.

*The Otter Raft*, 33.

## Porpoise listed

The conchito or Gulf of California harbour porpoise *Phocoena sinus* was listed as endangered on 9 January 1985. Many have been accidentally killed by gillnet fishing in the last 40 years, and there have been no confirmed sightings since 1980.

*Endangered Species Technical Bulletin*, X, 2.

## Mercury causing loon deaths?

Several thousands of loons, or great northern divers *Gavia immer*, died in their wintering grounds off the Gulf coast of Florida in 1983. Tests have since revealed that the birds had high levels of mercury in their tissues, and die-offs have continued in 1984 and 1985. Research is needed to discover where the mercury is coming from—acid rain affecting breeding lakes in North America and Canada has been suggested—and why only loons are affected.

*Living Bird Quarterly*, 4, 2.

## Kangaroo rat victim of shrinking habitat

The US Fish and Wildlife Service has

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Young masked bobwhite quail at Patuxent Wildlife Research Center.

listed the Fresno kangaroo rat *Dipodomys nitratoides exilis* as 'Endangered'. Its range, in the San Joaquin Valley in Fresno County, California, has shrunk to 857 acres (347 ha) of state-owned land due to habitat losses to agriculture and livestock grazing. *Endangered Species Technical Bulletin*, X, 2.

### Ageing chub caught

An endangered bonytail chub *Gila elegans* has been captured from Lake Mohave and taken to join the endangered fish breeding programme at Dexter National Fish Hatchery in New Mexico. It is only the nineteenth bonytail chub to be caught in the lower basin of the Colorado River over the past 10 years. The chubs in the lake have survived since a dam was built in the early 1950s—the youngest caught was 34 years old—and, although conditions are suitable for adults, the requirements for spawning are lacking. Introduced striped bass *Morone saxatilis* may eliminate those few chub remaining. The US Fish and Wildlife Service plan to reintroduce the species into parts of its former range. *Endangered Species Technical Bulletin*, X, 4.

### Quail ranch

The Buenos Aires Ranch, near Tucson, Arizona, has been bought for the endangered masked bobwhite quail

*Colinus virginianus ridgwayi*, which no longer occurs in the wild in the US, although some survive in Mexico. The ranch is the only place in the US with suitable habitat for the species, and the Fish and Wildlife Service plan to reintroduce captive-bred quail chicks from the Patuxent Wildlife Research Center, using wild caught Texas bobwhites *C. v. texanus* as foster parents. *Endangered Species Technical Bulletin*, X, 5.

### Endangered List reaches 854

The interior least tern *Sterna antillarum athalassos*, which breeds along the Mississippi and Missouri Rivers, and three subspecies of beach mice, found along the barrier island sand dunes of the Gulf Coast, have been added to the US list of endangered and threatened species, which now totals 854 species. Tern numbers have declined due to destruction of their breeding grounds through vegetative encroachment, through stream channelization and reservoir construction. The habitat of the beach mice, of which the Perdido key beach mouse *Peromyscus polionotus trissyllepsis* is the most endangered with 26 left, is being rapidly developed for recreational and commercial use. The three individuals caught last October from a small coastal area of private land scheduled for development (see *Oryx*, July 1985, page 173) have been released in Gulf State Park in Alabama, about one mile (1.6

km) west of their place of capture. *Endangered Species Technical Bulletin*, X, 5.

### Alien trees causing problems in Florida

Alien trees, introduced earlier this century, are causing problems in Florida. The Australian pine *Casuarina equisetifolia* has spread along waterways and the south-west coast of the Everglades National Park, where its roots are so dense that they are destroying the sandy beaches on which the threatened loggerhead turtle nests. The Brazilian pepper *Schinus terebinthifolius* already covers thousands of acres along the coast and has begun to invade the mangroves. The paperbark tree *Melaleuca quinquenervia* has colonized 60 sq miles of swampland in southern Florida, where it dries out the marshes and increases the severity of bush fires. *Time*, 17 June 1985.

### Four threatened plants

Four plants were added to the US endangered species list in April 1985. The beautiful goetzia *Goetzia elegans*, an evergreen shrub endemic to Puerto Rico, is threatened by trimming the roadside vegetation, livestock grazing and limestone mining. The large-flowered fiddleneck *Amsirickia grandiflora* is an orange-flowered annual surviving only in a half-acre (0.2-ha) site in California. Fewer than 700 individuals of the sedge *Carex specuicola* exist around three Arizona springs, where they are susceptible to damage from livestock and water development. Most of the 20 populations of rhizome fleabane *Erigeron rhizomatus*, in northern New Mexico, are close to inactive uranium claims. *Endangered Species Technical Bulletin*, X, 5.

### Hawaii forest is woodchipped

Hawaiian conservationists are in protest about the felling for woodchips of the last good stand of lowland rain forest, Kalapana, in Puna, by the Biopower Corporation for electricity generation. The Corporation has ignored all recommendations from ecologists, despite its statement that it is committed to

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saving any unique or irreplaceable forest in Puna.  
*Elepaio*, **45**, 12.

## Central America

### A way to get the grass back

A US\$170,000 sea grass restoration project by the Florida International University has developed a technique for re-establishing sea grass to 18 areas in Jamaica, where it had been destroyed by pollution. The technique involves placing 15-cm diameter turves 1 m apart to form a dense meadow within 4 months. The sea grass stabilizes sediment and provides a habitat for fish and invertebrates.

*Marine Pollution Bulletin*, **16**, 5.

### Hutia reintroduction plan

Twenty Jamaican hutias *Geocapromys brownii*, offspring of 11 animals collected between 1972 and 1975 and bred at Jersey Zoo, are to be flown to Jamaica as part of a plan that involves Jamaica's National Resource and Conservation Division and the Jersey Wildlife Trust. The hutias, once plentiful in Jamaica, are now found only in unstable fragmented populations, and the reintroduced animals will be released into private estates in 1986.

*Caribbean Times*, 7 June 1985.

### Belize under pressure to use paraquat

The newly elected Belize Government plans to resume spraying the country's marijuana fields with paraquat (it was suspended in 1983). Farmers and ecologists protest that the spray harms crops and wildlife, but Belize is under pressure from the US Drug Enforcement Agency to control the outflow of drugs, and the US Congress is considering aid embargoes on countries that do not control drug production. British officials are also keen to spray with paraquat, marketed by ICI, the British-based multinational, under the brand-name Gramoxone.

*New Scientist*, 6 June 1985.

### Help for Atitlan grebe

A conservation area has been set up for

the Atitlan grebe *Podilymbus gigas* in its Guatemalan lake home with the help of conservationist Anne Le Bastille. A grant from the World Nature Association has been used to build a fence to keep out predators. The lake is being polluted by development, introduced fish are depleting the small fish on which the grebe feeds, and sheltering reeds are being cut.

*World Nature News*, **22**.

### Hope for valuable rain forest

The MacArthur Foundation has provided a million-dollar grant towards the purchase of Costa Rica's La Selva Zona Protectora, and three conservation groups, WWF-US, the US Nature Conservancy and the Organization for Tropical Studies, must match this by the end of 1985. The Zona Protectora, a narrow 7700-ha (19,000-acre) band of rain forest, connects La Selva Research Station of the Organization of Tropical Studies and Braulio Carrillo National Park. Costa Rica's National Park Service designated this corridor as a protected zone in 1982, freezing land development and prohibiting logging, burning and hunting, but did not have the money to buy out the owners.

*Focus*, **7**, 3.

## South America

### Twins a sea lion record?

The first unequivocal evidence of a twin birth of Galapagos sea lions *Zalophus californianus wollebaeki* was recorded in December 1984 by Sylvia Harcourt. There are many reports of unusual fertility in 1984 in animals that suffered heavy population losses during the 1982-83 El Niño.

*noticias de Galapagos*, **41**.

### Flightless grebe translocated

Two pairs of the endangered Junin flightless grebe *Podiceps taczanowskii* have been transferred from Lake Junin, a remote lake in the Peruvian Andes and their only home, to a nearby lake to try to ensure the survival of the species. The grebes in Junin Lake—300 in 1977—are threatened by pollution from mining and the falling water level due to a hydroelectric power plant at the Lake's mouth.

*World Birdwatch*, **7**, 1.

## Skin census results

The results of a census of carnivore skins confiscated in 14 states and territories of Brazil over the last 5 years suggest that at least six carnivores not currently considered to be endangered in Brazil are suffering considerable hunting pressure: foxes *Dusicyon* spp., river otter *Lutra longicaudis*, giant otter *Pteronura brasiliensis*, ocelot *Felis pardalis*, margay *F. wiedi* and jaguar *Panthera onca*. The low number of giant otter skins in trade, the most exploited mustelid before hunting became illegal, could mean that the species is endangered.

*TRAFFIC Bulletin*, **VII**, 1.

## Prison for barbecuing birds

Two Brazilians who held a barbecue, in which 2400 wild birds formed the main course, have been found guilty of environmental damage. The judge sent each man to prison for one year and fined each US\$370, the heaviest penalty applicable under the Fauna Protection Law. This is the first time that anyone has been imprisoned in Brazil for killing wild birds.

*UNEP News*, May 1985.

## Grebe survey gives cause for optimism

According to the Fundacion Vida Silvestre Argentina, the hooded grebe *Podiceps gallardoi* is more widespread and abundant than previously believed. Surveys carried out in the summer of 1984-85 have revised the population upwards to at least 2500 birds. A disastrous mortality, which occurred when the birds nested on a lake without suitable food for the hatchlings, is now believed to be part of a natural cycle.

*J. A. Burton*.

## Sea lion hunt in Chile

In a move that has angered Chilean conservationists, the Government has authorized a commercial kill of 30,000 sea lions *Otaria flavescens* along a 1200-mile (1930-km) stretch of coast. There has been no census, but limited surveys suggest that sea lion populations are vulnerable; sea lions also mix with related species that are certainly depleted.

*Animal Welfare Institute Quarterly*, **33**, 4.

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## Australia/Antarctica

### 'Save the Whale' kit

Several Australian coastal towns are being given special kits to help save stranded whales, dolphins, seals and turtles.

*The Times*, 5 June 1985.

### Orchid reintroductions

Six rare and endangered Australian orchid species have been reintroduced into nature reserves, thanks to a propagation technique perfected by a British botanist, Mark Clements, working at the National Botanic Garden in Canberra. The technique involves culturing the orchid seeds in a medium inoculated with fungus extracted from the roots of established orchids.

*IUCN Bulletin*, 16, 1–3.

### Wetland starved of water

The Water Resources Commission of New South Wales, Australia, allowed an important wetland near Booligal, on the Lachlan River, to be starved of water in favour of farming interests in January 1985. Thousands of waterbirds died. The Minister for Planning and Environment and the Minister for Natural Resources have now promised a number of steps to improve wildlife conservation, including better liaison and a review of the State Water Plan with wildlife conservation in mind.

*Australian Conservation Foundation Newsletter*, 17, 3.

### Endangered ducks killed

During the last duck hunting season in Victoria and New South Wales, Australia, 550 freckled ducks *Stictonetta naevosa*, an endangered species, were killed. In Victoria, 16 people were charged with shooting freckled ducks, and the State Government is suggesting that some wetlands will be closed to hunters in future seasons.

*Threatened Species—Conservation Alert*, 12.

*The Sydney Morning Herald*, 26 March 1985.

### Abalone fishery decline

The Government of New South Wales in Australia has introduced new rules to

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reduce the number of divers working in the State's abalone fishery in an effort to restore abalone populations. In 1968 the catch was 1400 tons; by 1984 it had fallen to 710 tons.

*Fishing News International*, 24, 4.

### Tasmania needs wilderness managing body

A council of politicians has been proposed to control the future of the Western Tasmanian World Heritage Area. Conservationists object to the proposal, saying that the whole of western Tasmania, not just the Heritage Area, should be managed as a wilderness under a body similar to the Great Barrier Reef Marine Park Authority to avoid threats from hydroelectric schemes, logging, mining and road-building.

*Australian Conservation Foundation Newsletter*, 17, 2.

### Tasmanian forests exported as woodchip

The logging of Tasmania's virgin forests for woodchip exports to Japan is the greatest current threat to the State's forests. The threatened areas include the Lemonthyme Forest, next to the Cradle Mountain–Lake St Clair National Park, and the Reynolds Falls area to the north-west. On the east coast, the Douglas–Apsley region is the subject of a multiple-use management plan that would allow wood-chipping within the borders of the proposed national park. Conservationists accuse the Forestry Commission of not evaluating alternatives to woodchipping.

*Australian Conservation Foundation Newsletter*, 17, 3.

### Park or sawmill?

The beautiful limestone scenery of the Western Paparoas may become New Zealand's 11th national park. However, it is also viewed as a possible source of timber for a nearby sawmill.

*Forestry and Bird*, February 1985/GNUS.

### Good and bad news about kakapos

A new population of the world's heaviest parrot, the kakapo *Strigops habroptilus*, was discovered in 1985 in

north-west Nelson, South Island, New Zealand. Males were heard booming, but it is not yet known whether they bred. In the only known breeding population, on Stewart Island, the three females laid nine eggs, but seven failed to hatch and the two chicks disappeared. In all, there are about 50 kakapos known to be alive; 21 are on Little Barrier Island, having been moved there from Stewart Island in 1982 because of feral cats. They are not expected to breed for at least another year.

### Black robin death announced in Parliament

'Old Blue', the female Chatham Island black robin *Petroica traversi* that in 1980 was among the last five of the species, was missing, believed dead, at the start of 1985 breeding season. She raised enough chicks to increase the population to 30 by 1984—all but two are her direct descendants. Her passing was announced in the New Zealand Parliament.

*World Birdwatch*, 7, 1.

### Net investigation for sea lion

The New Zealand, or Hooker's, sea lion *Phocarctos hookeri*, one of the rarest marine mammals, is the focus of a new WWF/IUCN project to discover how many are killed by becoming entangled in fishing nets.

*WWF Monthly Report*, March 1985.

### Rat alarm

There has been an unconfirmed sighting of a rat at the South African meteorological base on Gough Island, which is one of the last large unspoilt sub-antarctic seabird colonies left.

*W. R. P. Bourne*.

### New conservation areas for Antarctica?

The Scientific Committee on Antarctic Research (SCAR) is proposing 26 new conservation areas in Antarctica to ensure protection of sufficient areas of different ecosystems. SCAR's new proposals will be put to an Antarctic Treaty Consultative Meeting in October 1985. If accepted, there will be 63 conservation areas in the Antarctic region, of which 25 will be Specially Protected

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Areas and 29 Sites of Special Scientific Interest. A further nine areas merit additional protection.

## Antarctic oil evidence

Analysis of sediment from the floor of Bransfield Strait, north of the Antarctic Peninsula, has yielded the first strong evidence of oil in Antarctica, according to researchers on the West German ship *Polarstern*. The 16 Antarctic Treaty signatories are still negotiating, in secret, how to exploit the continent's resources.

*The New York Times*, 21 May 1985.

## A camp to defend a continent

The Greenpeace boat *Gondwana* is sailing to Antarctica to establish the first international base on the continent devoted exclusively to research and direct action in defence of the Antarctic environment. Greenpeace has also drafted the Antarctic Declaration, which calls for the protection of Antarctica for ever. It is open to signature by any citizen or organization.

## Oceania

### Recovery plan for Pacific turtles

The US National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) has determined that there are no native cultures outside the Trust Territories of the Pacific Islands that are dependent on the taking of sea turtles, and that there is no justification for authorizing a subsistence take elsewhere in the Pacific. The NMFS has denied requests to take sea turtles by indigenous peoples of Guam and Hawaii, and plans to establish a joint Pacific sea turtle recovery team with the US Fish and Wildlife Service and the State and Territorial Governments.

*Marine Pollution Bulletin*, 16, 5.

## People

The first eight SSC Peter Scott Awards (for 1982–84) were presented at the IUCN General Assembly in Madrid in November 1984. Among the recipients were Richard Fitter and Maisie Fitter (see page 252 of this issue), Jesus Garzon Heydt and Dr Lance McCaskill (See *Oryx*, July 1985, page 176). The other four awards went to: Dr David Bramwell, on behalf of the Jardín

Botánico Viera y Clavijo in the Canary Islands, of which he is Director, for its conservation work on the Islands' endemic flora; Nick Carter, for his investigations that led to the exposure of pirate whaling in the 1970s; Wahab Owadally, Conservator of Forests in Mauritius, for his work to preserve the endangered species of Mauritius and Round Island; and Jurgen Rottman, a Chilean veterinarian, for dedication to the promotion of wildlife conservation in his country.

Dr George Archibald, world-renowned ornithologist and Director of the International Crane Foundation, whose conservation efforts have fostered international co-operation to save cranes, was awarded WWF's highest honour, a Gold Medal, on 19 May 1985.

David Attenborough, pioneer of British TV programmes on natural history, received a Knighthood in the Queen's birthday honours list in June 1985.

At the IUCN General Assembly in Madrid in November 1984, three Valour Awards and two Merit Awards, respectively, were presented to: Dr Robert Brown from Australia, for his courageous personal leadership in defence of the Western Tasmania Wilderness National Parks World Heritage Site; the Alpine Rescue Team of Mount Cook National Park in New Zealand, for outstanding bravery and skill in an incident in 1983, when two of the team were trapped; Passe Manneh, of Senegal, for his valorous act in pursuit of ivory poachers in Niokolo Koba National Park in 1984, in which he was killed; Gabriel Charles, Director of the Forestry Division of St Lucia, for his innovative development and management of protected areas; and Rob Milne, of the US, for over two decades of global leadership in support of development and training in the National Parks Service.

*Parks*, 10, 1.

Tim W. Clark has been awarded the Chicago Zoological Society's first Presidential Award for his work in helping to save the black-footed ferret from extinction in its last stronghold in Wyoming.

Rajiv Gandhi, India's Prime Minister, has accepted the John C. Phillips

Memorial Medal, IUCN's highest award, on behalf of his late mother, former Prime Minister Indira Gandhi. The citation accompanying the award, made in June, reads in part: 'Indira Gandhi was a gifted naturalist from her earliest years, her sense of kinship between people and nature was already developed in her childhood outlook and grew with her until she became a legend in her own time as a dedicated champion of nature conservation . . . Her heartfelt support for the World Conservation Strategy, the World Charter for Nature, and many other international initiatives and agreements aimed at putting conservation into practice worldwide was a great source of inspiration to the global conservation movement.'

Peter Kramer and G. T. Corley Smith were awarded the National Order 'Al Mérito' by the Ecuadorean Government for their services to science and conservation in the Galapagos Islands on their respective retirements from the posts of President and Secretary General of the Charles Darwin Foundation. Both have been concerned with the protection of the archipelago's environment since the early 1960s.

Maria Tereza Padua has been elected as Secretary General to the Brazilian Forestry Development Institute (IBDF) following recent changes in the Government. Maria Tereza Padua, Paul Getty Prizewinner in 1983, resigned from the directorship of IBDF's Department of National Parks and Equivalent Reserves in 1984 over the Brazilian President's decision to allow the building of a road through the Araguaia National Park.

The African Wildlife Foundation appointed a new President, Dr Paul T. Schindler, to succeed Robert P. Smith on his retirement in June 1985. Dr Schindler comes from his post as Director of Development of the World Resources Institute in Washington, DC, USA.

## Obituary

Myles Joseph Dunphy, pioneering conservationist, known widely in his later years as 'the father' of the Australian wilderness movement, died on 30 January 1985 at the age of 93.

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