



Briefly

INTERNATIONAL

Conservation Merit Awards

The first of two new WWF Conservation Merit Awards were presented by the new President, HRH Prince Philip, at the 20th Anniversary celebrations, to Dr Felix Nyahoza for education work in Tanzania, and Sandra Price for her work in building up the Wildlife Clubs of Kenya.

Members of Honour

WWF has appointed five Members of Honour for outstanding services to conservation: Byron Antipas of Greece, Norman Carr of Zambia, Dr Douglas Hey, South Africa, Wahajuddin A. Kermani of Pakistan, and John H. Loudon, of the Netherlands, the retiring President.

Posthumous Roll of Honour

Three distinguished conservationists whose names have been inscribed on WWF's posthumous International Conservation Roll of Honour are Michel Brosselin of France, Leslie Brown, Scotland and Kenya, and Dr J.H. Westermann, Netherlands.

CITES Ratifications

Liberia, Mozambique, Zimbabwe, Cameroon and Belgium have ratified CITES, bringing membership to 72.

New Ramsar Members

Membership of the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance (the Ramsar Convention) stands at 29, with ratifications in 1980 and 1981 by the Netherlands, Japan, Morocco, Tunisia, Portugal and Canada. So far 218 sites, covering six million ha, have been designated.

54th for IUCN

Qatar has become the 54th member state of IUCN.

Kokia cookea Found at Kew

A healthy seedling has been found at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, of *Kokia cookea*, the small Hawaiian tree that for a century has hovered on the verge of extinction and was recently thought to exist only as a branch grafted to another species (see *Oryx*, April 1980: 222). It has grown from a seed taken in 1975 from a tree that is now dead, by Clive Bulmer, then a Kew graduate student studying

Hawaiian plants and working at the Waimea Arboretum.

Dragonfly Surveys

On the recommendation of the newly formed SSC (Species Survival Commission) Dragonfly Group, which met in Japan last year, WWF/IUCN has agreed to sponsor five dragonfly surveys: *Epiophlebia laidlawi* in Nepal's Katmandu Basin; *Hermaphlebia mirabilis*, recently discovered in Victoria, Australia; *Megalagrion pacificum* in Hawaii; the dragonflies of the eastern slopes of the Andes in Ecuador; and the dragonflies of north-eastern Turkey.

Thirteen Endangered Ant Species

Thirteen species of ant are on the preliminary list of endangered species drawn up by the new IUCN/SSC Ant Specialist Group, chaired by Dr D Cherix of Switzerland. Status surveys are urgently needed. Ants are distributed world-wide and in all habitats. They constitute about 0.1 per cent of the insects; this is calculated to be some 1,000,000,000,000,000 individuals.

Breeding Breakthrough

A new technique for freeze-drying poultry semen could simplify captive breeding of wild Galliformes, particularly pheasants.

Film Festival

WWF is holding an international film festival in Bristol in October under the patronage of HRH Prince Philip.

BRITISH ISLES

SPNC Gets Royal Charter

The Queen has granted the Royal prefix to the Society for the Promotion of Nature Conservation, the national association of the 42 county nature conservation trusts. It now becomes the Royal Society for Nature Conservation.

Fifty Years for Whipsnade

Whipsnade Zoo, the first zoo to breed cheetahs in captivity, celebrated its 50th birthday in May. *Whipsnade*, by Elspeth Huxley, commissioned to commemorate the occasion, is reviewed on page 188.

Editors Own *British Birds*

The monthly magazine *British Birds*, founded by the late H.F. Witherby and for 74 years

published by commercial companies, has successfully completed its first year under the ownership of its editorial board – Stanley Cramp, Peter Grant, Malcolm Ogilvie and Tim Sharrock – who bought the magazine in order to produce it for the benefit of ornithology rather than for private profit.

Ending Sloppy Pesticide Use

The amount of pesticides used by British farmers could be reduced a thousand times, Dr George Cooke, chief research scientist at the Agricultural Research Council, told an Oxford farming conference. Pollution and the build-up of resistance in pest species could be avoided if pesticides were used only to administer a lethal dose on the target species.

Chemicals Lose Approval

Dieldrin, Aldrin and DDT are among several chemicals withdrawn from the latest edition of the Ministry of Agriculture's List of Approved Products (under the Agricultural Chemicals Approval Scheme) following the bans or restrictions on their use by the EEC.

American Flatworm in Loch Ness

A freshwater flatworm, *Phagocata woodworthi*, never before recorded outside north-eastern North America, has been discovered in abundance in Loch Ness by scientists from the Institute of Terrestrial Ecology, who suspect that it may have come across the Atlantic with American equipment used in searches for the Loch Ness Monster.

Heather Diggers Fined, a Little

Three men caught digging the rare heather *Erica vagans*, which grows in Britain only on the Lizard, Cornwall, were fined £30 each plus £10 costs. Between them they had 500 plants in eight plastic bags, and when arrested were digging within sight of a sign asking people not to take wild plants.

River Diverted for Nest Box

After Warwickshire's only known dipper *Cinclus cinclus* nesting site, a crevice in a weir on the River Alne, near Wootton Wawen, was filled in during maintenance work, the Severn Water Authority agreed to divert the river for a day while the RSPB fitted a nesting box to the weir wall.

Rare Moss Discovered

A rare moss, *Leptododium gemmascens*, recorded in Britain only six times since the war, has been found at Patmore Heath, Herts, and the Fir and Pond Woods reserves in Middlesex.

In both cases the moss was growing on decaying grass stems, a departure from its usual habitat – thatched houses. It is the first record for Middlesex and the second for Hertfordshire, despite the fact that its European range is confined to Britain and Normandy.

Vole Watchers Wanted

After reports of a decline in water voles *Arvicola amphibius*, probably caused by pesticides, feral mink *Mustela vison* and bankside clearance, the Mammal Society is appealing for reports of sightings: Dr K.R. Ashby, Department of Zoology, University of Durham, DH1 3LE.

EUROPE

Endangered in Europe

Seventy-three European bird species are listed as endangered in the Council of Europe's revised list produced this year; 14 of these have been added since the previous list, 1974. Of the butterflies 96 are endangered, 15 of them approaching extinction. Alluvial forests in Europe have been much reduced. The Rhine forest in Alsace has been halved, and the Danube forests in Austria reduced by a quarter.

Malta Protects Birds

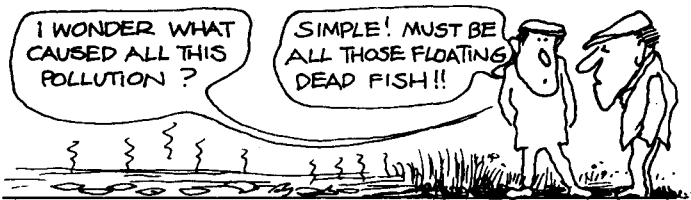
Malta has banned the hunting of birds of prey, nesting birds and non-game birds, and the sale and use of birdlime, netting, hooks and other equipment for killing or capturing migratory birds. May 22 – August 31 will be a close season on game birds. New sanctuaries include Ta' Cenc on Gozo, breeding site of Malta's only pair of peregrines. (See page 140.)

Montagu's Harrier Project

The Fonds d'Intervention pour les Rapaces has bought enough marshland in Lorraine, the last stronghold of Montagu's harrier *Circus pygargus*, to protect 30 of the region's 80 breeding pairs. The project began after 15ha of marsh was drained, depriving four pairs of nesting sites.

Czech Red Book

A 'red book' of Czechoslovak vascular plants lists 37 species as extinct and 39 as 'having disappeared' – together four per cent of native species. 57 per cent of the remaining plants are classified as endangered.



From *The Badger**

Hunters in Italy

Every year 150 million migratory birds are killed in Italy, according to the World Society for the Protection of Animals. Italy has the greatest density of hunters in the world – 7.3 per sq km, compared with a European average of 0.8. One Italian in 25 hunts (Belgium: one in 330). There are five times as many hunters as members of the armed forces. Some 50,000 tons of lead are discharged annually, with the average hunter shooting off 840 cartridges. \$4000 million is spent on equipment and ammunition, and the trade in netted birds brings in \$7000 million.

Wolverines Killed by Licence

Three wolverines were killed in Norway by permission of the authorities following sheep killing. They belonged to a group of 20. The total population in Norway is only about 200.

Grain for Geese

In February the Spanish Ministry of Agriculture provided 100 tonnes of grain to feed 50,000 migrating greylag geese in the drought-stricken Coto Doñana National Park.

Raven Returns to Holland

The raven has been successfully reintroduced to the Netherlands, where it ceased to breed in 1926. After an unsuccessful attempt in 1960, three pairs bred in 1976, and now nine pairs are breeding.

New Herpetology Group

New Herpetologists from eight European countries have formed the Societa Europaea Herpetologia to promote research on and conservation of reptiles and amphibians: Dr H. Wesmuth, Museum für Naturkunde, Arsenalplatz 3, D 7140 Ludwigsburg, W. Germany.

NORTH AMERICA

Reagan Rescinds Export Ban

An order by President Carter banning the export of 'dangerous products' – notably pesticides whose use is prohibited inside the US – was rescinded by President Reagan on the grounds that the decree would handicap US trade.

**Journal of the Irish Wildlife Federation*

Park Airport Approved

Despite opposition from the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of the Interior and private conservation groups, the Federal Aviation Administration has opened the Jackson Hole Airport in Grand Teton National Park, Wyoming, to commercial jets. EPA disputes the FAA's contention that jets are only one decibel louder than the turboprops now using the airport; its own figures were ignored.

'Largest Conservation Grant'

The Mellon Foundation has given the Nature Conservancy, a private organisation, \$15 million to buy several hardwood forests in the South, and the Goodhill Foundation of New York has given \$10 million for 'lands representing the nation's most threatened ecological systems'. The Mellon grant, says the Conservancy, is 'the largest ever made to conservation'.

Audubon Halts Water Project

Legal manoeuvring by the Audubon Society has halted the nearly completed Garrison Diversion in North Dakota, a billion-dollar irrigation project that would destroy almost as much land as it would irrigate, damage 13 national wildlife refuges and pollute streams and rivers on both sides of the US-Canada border (it is a major source of tension between the countries). First the Society forced a few environmental alterations, then successfully claimed in court that the alterations meant that the project would have to be re-authorised by Congress.

Walrus Ivory Seized

More than five tons of walrus ivory, representing about 750 animals and worth \$450,000, have been seized by the Fish and Wildlife Service in Anchorage, Alaska, after 11 months of undercover investigation aided by TRAFFIC-USA. Under the Marine Mammal Protection Act only Alaska natives may possess raw ivory, but illegal trade has recently raised the annual walrus kill from 1500 to about 10,000, from a total population of 210,000.

Polar Bear Prediction

About 900 polar bears *Thalarctos maritimus* will have been killed legally in 1981, most of them in Greenland, Canada and Alaska, according to an estimate by the IUCN/SSC Polar Bear Specialist Group.

Indians Plan Bear Management

The Blackfoot Indian Tribal Council has passed a resolution authorising the development of a Tribal Grizzly Policy, a Bear Management Plan, and a bear research programme, all of which are being started, according to the SSC Bear Group.

They Don't Feed the Bears Now

The ultimate in bear feeding: in British Columbia miners were feeding black bears coming to their camp. The bears became so tame that they were sleeping under the cookhouse (unknown to the miners) and in winter a female denned up there. In May she emerged with three cubs, all 'ready to eat a horse', as Grant Ellis records in *Wildlife Review*, 'and started tearing things up in the cookhouse'. Eventually they were trapped, tranquillised and removed by the Wildlife Control Officer.

Gene Outwits Hunters

Hunters of Dall's sheep *Ovis dalli* in the Yukon are annoyed by a phenomenon that they themselves have probably caused. This is the increasing incidence of deformed horns on rams, making them worthless as trophies but leaving them alive to pass on the 'bad' gene, while the rams with normal horns continue to be shot.

White-tailed Deer on Islands

Between 70 and 80 endangered Columbian white-tailed deer *Odocoileus virginianus leucurus* have been discovered on a cluster of five islands in the Columbia River, raising the known population by nearly half. The deer, a victim of overhunting and habitat destruction, was thought to be reduced to 150-200 in Washington State's Columbia White-tailed Deer National Wildlife Refuge.

Caribou Herd Listed

The only caribou in the 'Lower 48' states, 20-30 individuals that range through northern Idaho, north-eastern Washington and southern British Columbia, have been listed as endangered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. Caribou disappeared from New England in 1908 and from the Great Lakes region in 1940. The remaining handful, known as the Selkirk Mountain Herd, are threatened by clear-cutting, fires, and disturbance from roads and snowmobiles.

Raccoon Dogs in Canada

An Ontario fur rancher has imported 140

raccoon dogs *Nyctereutes procyonoides* from Europe. A native of eastern Asia, this canid was introduced for similar reasons to European Russia in the 1920s, has now spread as far west as Germany and Sweden and is considered a potential pest as serious as the American mink. When the Canadian Nature Federation protested to the provincial and federal authorities, it discovered that there were no laws against importing exotics.

Grand Canyon Free of Burros

The programme organised by the Fund for Animals to airlift feral burros (donkeys) out of the Grand Canyon – as an alternative to shooting them – has been completed at a cost of \$500,000. Of the 557 animals removed in nets slung under helicopters from the 1,218,000-acre national park, 200 have already been adopted.

Captive Mexican Wolves Breed

For the first time Mexican wolves, of which fewer than 50 remain in the wild, have bred in captivity. The world's only captive female, mated with one of six captive males, produced one male and three female pups at the Wild Canid Survival and Research Centre in St Louis, Missouri.

Humane Predator Test

Discovering which predators are eating the eggs of ground-nesting birds usually means putting out dummy eggs injected with strychnine and then recording the corpses, but US laws against poisoning predators have forced a new method, developed at Texas A&M University: a sort of rough comb implanted near the eggs that scrapes off tufts of the predators' fur, which is later analysed.

Whooping Crane Migration 1981

In the spring of 1981 78 whooping cranes left Aransas Wildlife Reserve in Texas for Canada's Wood Buffalo National Park, and 17 were accounted for in the foster-parent flock of sandhill cranes that migrates between New Mexico and Idaho.

Kirtland's Warbler Increase

The 1980 census of Kirtland's warbler in Michigan has recorded 242 singing males, an increase of 32 over 1979.

Cactus Hedgehogs

A report in the *Cactus and Succulent Journal* tells of two trips to the West Texas desert, which had been stripped almost bare of several

formerly common cactus species. A Mexican labourer admitted selling the cacti for 5c each to people who hauled them away by the truckload. Back home in Louisiana, the author came across one of the West Texas species, *Echinocereus dasycanthus*, for sale in his local supermarket for \$5. The plants, called 'Happy Texas Hedgehogs', were decorated with teddy-bear eyes and neckties.

How to Get a Study Done

When the US Fish and Wildlife Service proposed to list the Illinois mud turtle *Kinostemon flavescens spooneri* as endangered, the Monsanto Chemical Co. objected because one of their plants was inside the area proposed as 'Critical Habitat', and then spent half a million dollars on study and conservation of the turtle. At the public hearing they challenged the proposal, the turtle was not listed, and the two-year time limit means that the species has been withdrawn.

Acid Lake Solution?

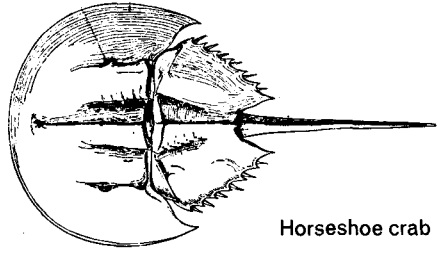
A University of Georgia engineer has discovered two bacteria that can convert the sulphur contaminant in acid rain into water-soluble chemicals, opening the possibility of restoring lakes that have been sterilised by the sulphur from coal and oil power stations. The bacteria are expected to be ready for commercial application in about five years.

Dark Future for White River

Some 30 water projects that would exploit Utah's White River are competing for approval by both State and Federal agencies, despite the fact that the river is inhabited by three endemic fish, the Colorado River squawfish and the humpback and bonytail chubs. All three once used the entire Colorado system, to which the White belongs, but have been forced by dams into the only relatively free-flowing tributary. Utah is in the forefront of the 'sagebrush rebellion', a bid by the states to control their own resources, and since the new Federal administration is sympathetic to this, there is little hope for the river or the fish.

New Threat to Horseshoes

The blood of horseshoe or king crabs *Limulus polyphemus*, 'living fossils' that have hardly changed in 200 million years, has been found to be an ideal medium for detecting poisons in vaccines, and laboratories have been taking them by the ton from US east coast beaches. Since they are already exploited as animal fodder and tourist souvenirs, and killed as



Horseshoe crab

predators of clams, numbers have declined.

Cave Shrimp Rediscovered

Six specimens of the Kentucky cave shrimp *Palaemonias ganteri*, thought to have become extinct in 1967 because of pollution and the damming of its only habitat, the underground Echo River in Mammoth Cave, have been found by divers from the Cave Research Foundation. The National Parks and Conservation Association is pressing for the shrimp to be officially listed as endangered – which could help force a regional sewage treatment plan and the dismantling of the dam, now used only by a concessionaire running boat tours through the cave.

LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN

Peru Bans Anchovy Fishing

In the hope that its seriously depleted anchovy stocks can rebuild – in 20 years catches have fallen from 20 million to 2 million tons – Peru has banned anchovy fishing along all but 150 miles of its 1440-mile coastline.

Guan Protected

Peru has given full protection to the white-winged guan *Penelope albipennis*, rediscovered in 1977 after having been given up as extinct (see *Oryx* 15, 1: 33-7).

Dam to Flood Argentine Forest

About 200km of gallery forest along the River Parana in north-east Argentina will be flooded by the Yacreta-Apipe dam, planned jointly by Argentina and Paraguay. In compensation, the surviving gallery forests in the region will be protected.

Leatherback Bonanza

The estimate for the world population of leatherback turtles *Dermochelys coriacea* has been revised from about 35,000 to 104,000 after an aerial survey of the Mexican Pacific coast

south of Oaxaca showed large numbers on 600 miles of beaches, but the species should still be considered endangered, according to Dr Peter Pritchard, director of the WWF-US Marine Turtle Project.

Ecodevelopment in Mexico

The Organisation of American States and Mexico's Autonomous Agrarian University 'Antonio Narro' have established the 1000-ha Reserva del Cañon de San Lorenzo in the Chihuahuan desert near Saltillo, where landowners and herdsman who use its grass and timber will co-operate in managing the area.

AFRICA

Less Elephant Poaching in Uganda

In May the SSC African Elephant Group reported that elephant poaching in Uganda's Kabalega National Park had decreased since last year due to the authorities' anti-poaching work and the difficulty in getting illegal ivory past the numerous army road blocks. But there is a dearth of young calves. In Ruwenzori National Park elephant numbers have increased to over 200 due to incomers from neighbouring Zaire.

40 Men Guard 20,000 Square Miles

The 40 men in the anti-poaching units of Zambia's Save the Rhino Trust cover 90 per cent of the country's rhino and elephant populations in the Luangwa and Luano valleys and the lower Zambezi, a total of 20,000 square miles. In 1980 they arrested over 300 poachers, seized some 300 elephant tusks and confiscated over 100 illicit firearms.

Elephants in Zimbabwe

Aerial surveys of all Zimbabwe's national parks and safari areas suggest a national elephant population of 42,000.

Threatened Plants in Kenya

Six ways to save the threatened plants of Kenya are recommended in a pamphlet by G.M. Mungai and others, recently issued by the Wildlife Clubs of Kenya: (1) collect more information on the status of rare plants, and threats to them (mainly deforestation and agricultural development); (2) set up botanic gardens, for educational purposes, and to breed the rarities; (3) promote trade in seeds of rare plants, to protect those still in the wild; (4) protect more forests, especially the unique Kakamega Forest, rich in rare plants; (5)

establish more reserves, including some quite small ones; (6) legislate to empower the Government to control the trade in rare plants.

New Fruit Bat in Kenya

A new species of fruit bat, *Myonycteris relicta*, has been discovered in Kenya's Shimba Hills and is described by W. Bergmans in *Zoologische Mededelingen* 55,4.

Erosion Commission

President Daniel arap Moi of Kenya has appointed a commission to study present laws on soil conservation, afforestation and flood control and to review the work of the Ministries of Water, Agriculture and Environment and Natural Resources.

Cameroon Discovery of Forest Elephants

A hitherto unknown population of forest elephants *Loxodonta africana cyclotis*, several hundred strong, has been found in the Korup National Park, one of three newly created national parks in Cameroon which between them cover 10,000 sq km.

Guard Training in CAR

The Central African Republic, with the aid of grants from FAO, UNDP and the US Self-Help Program, has opened a game guard training centre at the Bamingi-Bangoran National Park. During the first class's first field exercise, the students caught 12 poachers of rhinos, fish, crocodiles and leopards. fFPS has donated a slide projector to the school.

Nigerian Conservation Group

A group of prominent Nigerians has set up a Nigerian Conservation Foundation to 'develop a programme modelled on the World Conservation Strategy, but which takes full account of the Nigerian situation'. The director is Yinka Fisher, a former Foreign Service official.

Endangered Flowers Sold in Europe

A South African botanist is appealing to Europeans not to buy wild flowers from his country. Many, he says, particularly the showier specimens often sold as cut flowers, come from the Fynbos, a region in the Cape Province that comprises the smallest of the world's six distinct floristic kingdoms. Some 100 species there have become extinct since the arrival of European settlers, and a further 1500 are endangered. One species commonly sold in Europe is the flamboyant, red *Erica pillansii*, whose entire native habitat covers an area not larger than five football fields.



ASIA

Taiwan Ends Whaling

Taiwan, formerly a major 'pirate' whaling nation (i.e. non-IWC), has announced that it will no longer hunt whales. This follows an IWC rule forbidding its members to buy whale products from non-members and a US threat to apply sanctions under the Packwood/Magnuson Act, which would have barred Taiwanese fishing inside the US territorial waters.

Turkey Protects Otters

Otters have been given full protection in Turkey.

South Asian Agreement

Eight South Asian nations, meeting in Colombo, Sri Lanka, in February – Afghanistan, Bangladesh, India, Iran, Maldives, Nepal, Pakistan and Sri Lanka – launched the South Asia Co-operative Environment Programme (SACEP) to eliminate wasteful use of natural resources and work together on conservation programmes.

Spare that Tree – or Else

Saudi Arabia has introduced a £150 fine for cutting down a tree.

National Park in Silent Valley, but . . .

The Kerala State Government has declared a national park in the Silent Valley but excludes the area that would be flooded by the controversial hydroelectric project.

Golden Langur in Bhutan

The golden langur *Presbytis geei* is rare in Assam where it was discovered by E.P. Gee as recently as 1956 because the Bhutan-Assam border is the southern edge of its range. Subhendu Sekhar Saha, of the Zoological Survey of India, writes in the *Bombay NHS Journal* that this monkey is not uncommon in parts of Bhutan.

New Bird Species in India

A new species of thrush has been discovered in the rain forest along the Noa Dihing river in eastern Arunachal Pradesh by Dr Salim Ali and Dr S. Dillon Ripley, with a party from the Bombay Natural History Society, and is described in the Society's *Journal* (77,1). *Brachypteryx cryptica* most closely resembles the rustybellied shortwing *B. hyperthya* but is generally lighter in colour with buff streaks on the head.

More Blackbuck for Pakistan

Six blackbuck, five females and a male, have been given by Copenhagen Zoo to WWF Pakistan, to add to the herd of 23 in Sind's Cholistan desert, where they were hunted out in the 1950s and 1960s. The 23, which are the result of 10 reintroductions from Texas in 1971, have not been breeding well, and new blood may be needed.

Frog Leg Loophole

Dealers in frogs' legs, millions of which are exported from India every year, evade a ban on export during the breeding season by keeping the frogs in tanks until mid-August, when export becomes legal. The main species involved are *Rana tigrina* and *R. hexadactyla*.

Survey of Raffles's Enormous Flowers

The twelve species of *Rafflesia*, parasitic plants, one of which produces the world's largest flower – spanning more than a metre – will be surveyed under the auspices of the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, backed by WWF/IUCN, after reports of a general decline in their habitats in Malaysia, Sumatra, Java, Borneo, and the Philippines. Discovered by Sir Stamford Raffles in 1818, the large one lives off the roots of vines and emerges only to flower.

Almacigas Overtapped

Almaciga trees *Agathis* spp. in the rain forests of Palawan – the source of the resin Manila copal – are dying of heart rot caused by overtapping and incorrect tapping and will disappear from the island within five years unless control measures are taken.

Anti-rabies Plants Reported

Plants that can cure rabies have been used for generations in parts of the Philippines, according to a report in a publication of the Filipino Forest Research Institute. One patient considered hopeless by doctors is said to have been cured by drinking a brew made from plants. The author, who says that this and other cures are old secrets of her family, does not know if the plants have ever been scientifically described. Local names include *hanliblib-on*, *lagnot* and *bojangjang*.

Exotic Weed Blocks River

The backwaters of Papua New Guinea's Sepik River are so choked with the exotic weed *Salvinia molesta*, a water fern, that in many places river transport has become impossible, and villagers are cut off from schools and

markets. The weed has also caused a sharp decline in one of the river's main resources, the saltfish tilapia *Sarotherodon mossambicus*.

The Smallest Fish

A minute endemic fish in the Philippines weighing 1½ gm, *Mistichthys luzonensis*, is now known only in one lake and believed to be endangered. It is one of the smallest vertebrates known.

New Jerboa in Mongolia

A new species of jerboa, named *Allactaga nataliae*, has been discovered in Mongolia and is described in *Zoologicheskii Zhurnal* 15,5.

When Swallows Did Make Spring

According to *Acta Zoologica Sinica*, in China in 2000 BC the official first day of spring was the day on which the first swallows were seen.

Swamp Tortoises Born in Captivity

Scientists at the Western Australian Research Centre at Wanneroo have announced the first successful captive breeding of a western swamp tortoise *Pseudemydura umbrina*, a sideneck tortoise whose total population in the two reserves set aside for it is 50. After injecting a gravid female with hormones to induce her to lay, two of three eggs hatched and both hatchlings survived.

Spreading the Noisy Scrub Bird

An attempt to establish a second population of noisy scrub birds *Atrichornis clamosus* is being made in Mount Many Peaks Nature Reserve, 15km from Two Peoples Bay in Western Australia, where it was discovered in 1973 in its only known site. Numbers have nearly doubled since then, to 72 breeding pairs and about 20 non-breeding males.

Mala Wallaby on Mainland

Five mala wallabies, previously thought to be extinct on the mainland and confined to islands off the Australian west coast, have been discovered in Northern Territory's Tanami Sanctuary, which has recently been turned over to Aboriginal ownership. There is some fear that the new Aboriginal custom of hunting with automatic weapons from four-wheel-drive vehicles may now threaten the wallabies.

First Bird Observatory

The Royal Forest and Bird Protection Society will establish New Zealand's first bird observatory and education centre, at Pauahatanui Inlet, near Wellington. It will be modelled after Minsmere in Suffolk and the Audubon Canyon Ranch at Bolinas, California.

Too Late

Afer many of the feral goats on Arawapa Island, New Zealand, had been killed, it was decided they were probably pure descendants of the now extinct Old English breed.

ANTIPODES

Rain Forest Logging Plans

The Australian Conservation Foundation is alarmed by a Queensland Forestry Department proposal to clear 4000 acres of lowland rain forest in the Daintree/Bloomfield area north of Cairns for sugar plantations. The forest supports 232 species of birds, 37 freshwater fish and a unique family of flowering plants. Half the State's original rain forests have already been cleared.

Bridled Nail-tailed Wallaby Mapped

The range of bridled nail-tailed wallaby *Onychogalea fraenata* has been mapped by Queensland National Parks and Wildlife Service. Described in 1866 as 'the most common of all the small species of the Kangaroo tribe', it appeared to have died out in the 1930s and was not seen again until 1973, when a fencing contractor working near Dingo identified one by a picture in *Woman's Day* magazine. Researchers now say that it is 'common' over an area of about 11,000ha, but with 'an extremely restricted distribution'. Its decline is blamed on loss of habitat to grazing land.

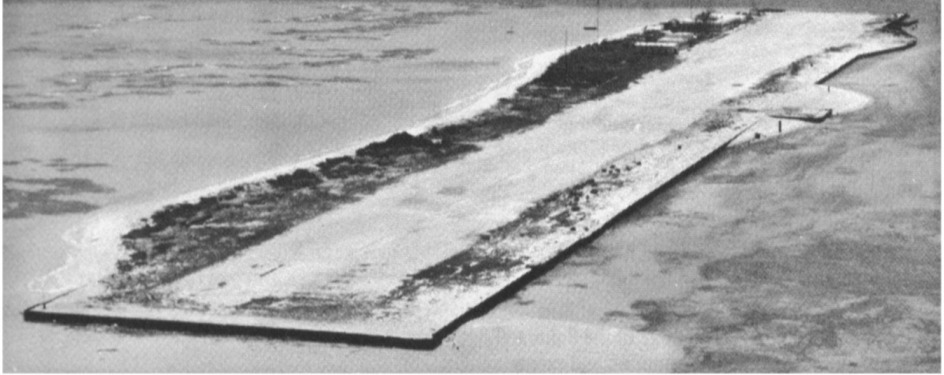
What Kills Livestock?

An Australian study of predators on livestock, mainly sheep, found that 29 per cent were dingoes, 60 per cent feral dogs and 11 per cent domestic dogs.

OCEANS

Enormous Krill Swarm

Scientists surveying the shrimplike crustacean krill *Euphausia superba*, whose numbers were controlled by the southern baleen whales before the whales' own numbers were so drastically reduced by man, have discovered near South Georgia the largest single school of sea animals ever measured – a krill swarm covering several square miles and weighing 10



TERN ISLAND, the largest island in Hawaii's French Frigate Shoals and thus an important resting place for the endangered Hawaiian monk seal. In 1942 the US Navy 'reconstructed' Tern Island, part of the Hawaiian Island National Wildlife Refuge, in order to build an emergency landing field. When this station was 'deactivated' in 1979, monk seal numbers immediately increased, and up to 24 were seen. The two resident biologists try to leave the beaches as undisturbed as possible.

million tonnes, equal to one-seventh of the world's annual catch of marine and freshwater fish and shellfish.

Tuna/Dolphin Setback

Federal observers aboard tuna boats may not gather evidence against captains for violations of the Marine Mammals Act – i.e. not trying sufficiently hard to spare dolphins entangled in nets – without search warrants, according to a ruling by a San Diego federal judge. This effectively prevents enforcement of the Act, which has reduced incidental dolphin deaths from more than 200,000 a year to less than 20,000.

Pollution Law Causes Oil Spill

A Panamanian ship carrying 200,000 gallons of bunker fuel and a cargo of ammonium phosphate tried to put into Bermuda for repairs to its fractured hull, but under the UK Prevention of Oil Pollution Act 1971 was ordered to be towed out of territorial waters; it sank not far from port, leaving a slick 1.5km long.

Ixtoc Tar Reducing Marine Life

Oil from the *Ixtoc 1* gusher, which spilled 140 million gallons into the Gulf of Mexico between June 1979 and March 1980 has formed tar reefs along 100 miles of Texas coast. These have already caused a drastic reduction in molluscs, amphipods and polychaetes and, according to the University of Texas Marine Science Institute, will probably remain intact for many years.

Iguana Breeding in Galapagos

After some initial setbacks captive breeding of land iguanas in the Galapagos Islands is now going ahead. By July 1980 there were 116 hatchlings of different ages in the corrals, but they cannot be returned to the wild until the feral dogs have been removed. In December a

team led by Hans Kruuk started a feral-dog elimination programme on Santa Cruz and southern Isabela.

Tonnes of Fish Wasted

Every year shrimp trawlers throw away about 21 million tonnes of the edible marine fish they catch incidentally – roughly equal to the Third World's annual fish consumption. Only one country, Guyana, has thought to build a processing plant to handle these fish, and as a result has almost doubled the protein harvest of its shrimp fleet.

When to Move Turtle Eggs

If green turtle *Chelonia mydas* eggs are to be taken to a hatchery, they should be moved either within three hours of having been laid or 20-25 days later. Disturbing them during the crucial first three weeks of development can damage the embryo, according to research at the Applied Ecology Research Station on Thursday Island, Queensland. Hatcheries often report high rates of infertility, but this may be the real problem.

An Extinct Dove

The Socorro dove, *Zenaidura macroura*, last seen in 1958 when it was common, is presumed extinct. An American expedition in April this year saw none in a week-long stay on this Pacific island, 250 miles south of Baja California. Feral cats are believed to be responsible.

Saved at Waimea

The IUCN Plant Red Data Book lists two endangered plants from Guam, both trees, *Serianthes nelsonii* and *Heritiera longipetiolata*. One of these *Serianthes* has not been seen recently in one of its Guam sites, and there are only four adult trees in its other site. Both trees, however, are growing successfully in the Waimea Arboretum in Hawaii.

NEW NATIONAL PARKS AND RESERVES

Tunisia has created three new national parks totalling 35,000ha – Ichkeul, the most important wetland in North Africa; Bou Hedma, a steppe on the edge of the Sahara, with dorcas gazelles and mouflon and extensive stands of acacias; and Chambi, a mountainous area of Aleppo pine, with a good population of mountain gazelles *Gazella gazella*.

Czechoslovakia has declared a Carpathian forest and grassland region in south-east Moravia, said to have one of the richest orchid populations in central Europe, a protected landscape.

More than 33,000 acres of Florida swampland has been given to the Trust for Public Land by the General Tire and Rubber Company, and the Trust has bought another 17,000 acres. Had the land, part of the eastern Everglades, ever been drained it would have affected water levels in the Everglades National Park.

Peru has declared three new reserves: the Macchupicchu Historic Sanctuary, 101,000ha; Calipuy National Reserve, 64000ha; and Calipuy Natural Sanctuary, 4500 ha. The Macchupicchu was declared a World Heritage Site in 1980.

PERSONALIA

Professor Sir Hermann Bondi has been appointed Chairman of the UK Natural Environment Research Council.

Nathaniel arap Chumo, National Organiser of the Wildlife Clubs of Kenya, has won the African Wildlife Leadership Foundation's 1980 Conservation Award.

Dr Jay D. Hair has been named chief executive officer of the US National Wildlife Federation, succeeding Thomas L. Kimball.

Dr Sidney Holt is Director of the International League for the Protection of Cetaceans set up in October 1980, and Sir Peter Scott is a member of the Executive.

Rodney Jackson has won one of the five 1981 Rolex Awards for Enterprise, worth 50,000 Swiss francs each, for a plan to radio-track snow leopards, following up his previous research (*Oryx*, November 1979: 191-5).

Mrs Ernest Kleinwort and Sir Herbert Bonar have become Vice-Presidents of WWF-UK.

Dr Friedemann Köster has succeeded Dr Hendrik Hoec as Director of the Charles Darwin Research Station in the Galapagos Islands.

Three new WWF-International appointments are: Executive Secretary, Warren Linder; Director of Development, Richard Hamilton; Director of Conservation and Special Scientific Adviser, Dr Arne Schiøtz, formerly of WWF Denmark.

Peter Olney succeeds Sir Hugh Elliott OBE as Chairman of the British Section of the International Council for Bird Preservation.

Professor Jean-Jacques Petter has been awarded the WWF Gold Medal in recognition of his conservation work in Madagascar.

Lorne Scott, who as a charter member of the North American Bluebird Society built a 2000-mile-long trail of bluebird nest boxes from Denholm, Saskatchewan, to Winnipeg, Manitoba, has received the Governor General's first Conservation Award.

Russell E. Train, President of WWF-US and former head of both the President's Council on Environmental Quality and the Environmental Protection Agency, has been awarded the National Academy of Science Public Welfare Medal.

OBITUARIES

Professor V.J. Chapman, eminent botanist and conservationist specialising in coastal wetlands, born in Britain and resident in New Zealand since 1946, died on December 5 1980, aged 70.

Dr P.J. Greenway OBE, the first taxonomic botanist in East Africa, founder of the region's first herbarium, author of several field guides, and a former editor of the *Journal* of the East African Natural History Society, has died, aged 82.

Barbara Ward, Baroness Jackson, died on May 31. She had been Chairman of the Council of the International Institute for Environment and Development since April 1980, and President from 1974 to 1980. In 1972 she published with René Dubos *Only One Earth: The Care and Maintenance of a Small Planet*.