

### Clive marsh conservation fund appeal

Many readers of *Oryx* will have heard of Clive Marsh, some will have had the good fortune to meet him – a remarkable man, a fine biologist and a truly great conservationist. Clive died in October 2000, 8 months after contracting encephalitis on a field survey in Lao PDR, a tragic loss for his wife Iggy and his children Marco and Carl, and a cruel blow for conservation in south-east Asia.

However, it was not in Asia where Clive's gifts first emerged. Clive undertook his doctoral fieldwork on the Tana River in Kenya, producing a seminal study on the endangered Tana River red colobus *Colobus badius rufomitatus*. But many of us remember Clive on the Tana, not for his endless hours of dedicated data collection, but sitting with village elders and discussing the potential and problems of conservation. No lecturing, no patronage, no wild promises, just straightforward telling it as it is, but with determination and infectious enthusiasm. Clive duly received his PhD from Bristol University, UK, but the main legacy of his work is not the ensuing series of academic papers – Clive was far prouder of the Tana River Primate Reserve.

Clive's next challenge was Malaysia, where he soon had the good fortune to link with the Sabah Foundation. In 1981, the Foundation decided to set up a conservation area within its enormous logging concession, and it was Clive who was given the opportunity of turning a concept into reality: the challenge of developing the 438 sq km Danum Valley Conservation Area, one of Sabah's last strongholds of undisturbed lowland rain forest. This was not an externally funded aid project. The Sabah Foundation was a logging business and Clive and conservation were competing interests. It was the sort of challenge that Clive enjoyed and excelled at; he was systematic and determined, yet he was also a pragmatic innovator. Leading from the front, he demanded excellence, yet mixed well at all levels with all peoples. Between 1982 and 1995, Clive was principally responsible for developing the Danum Valley Conservation Area and its Field Centre into what it is today, one of the foremost tropical forest conservation areas in the world. Clive was responsible for many outstanding initiatives at Danum, but there is one that he was particularly proud of that is rarely mentioned: he initiated the formation of the Sabah Nature Club, which has evolved into the largest environmental conservation

movement among students in Malaysia. Therein lies the foundation for this appeal.

In 1995, Clive decided it was time to move on, and his final years as scientist and conservationist were spent in the Lao PDR working for IUCN and the Lao Government on developing conservation management for some of the least-known tropical forests in the world.

Clive would approve of this appeal in *Oryx*, for its approach to conservation embodies much of what he stood for – good science, attention to the basics, pragmatism and unrelenting commitment. It is with this in mind that friends of Clive have set up the *Clive Marsh Conservation Fund*, which will be used to encourage and support young students from South-east Asia to undertake research projects and training, focusing on tropical forest conservation and with preference given to those undertaking primate studies. Helping to create a cadre of dedicated young national conservationists in the countries of South-east Asia will be a fitting tribute to Clive and the best way to carry on his efforts for rainforest conservation. The Wildlife Conservation Society have agreed to manage the Fund under their administrative structure, and therefore 100% of all donations will go to field projects. In addition, the Society will match donations on a dollar to dollar basis.

All donations should be sent to: Wildlife Conservation Society (Clive Marsh Conservation Fund), c/o Linda Krueger, Program Manager – Asia Program, 2300 Southern Boulevard, Bronx, NY 10460-1099, USA; Tel.: +1718 2203973; Fax: +1718 3644275; E-mail: lkrueger@wcs.org. Alternatively, donations can be paid directly to the Wildlife Conservation Society bank account with prior notification to Linda Krueger: Wildlife Conservation Society (Clive Marsh Conservation Fund), A/C# 133003663, Chase Bank ABA #021000021, 4 NY Plaza, New York, NY 10004-2413, USA.

Dick Watling  
Environment Consultants Fiji Ltd  
PO Box 2041, Government Buildings  
Suva, Fiji Islands  
E-mail: watling@is.com.fj

---

### Conference for young conservation scientists goes from strength to strength

In March 2001 the University of Cambridge's Zoology Department hosted the second annual Student Confer-

ence on Conservation Science. The aim of this series is to build links between conservation scientists at an early stage in their careers – with particular emphasis on fostering capacity-building in developing countries, and on encouraging close collaborations between scientists and practitioners in conservation agencies and NGOs. Key features of the meetings have therefore been attendance by students from a very broad range of countries, as well as the participation of experienced conservation professionals from organizations both in Cambridge and further afield.

The second meeting, held on 28–30 March, was attended by over 170 postgraduate students, from as far afield as Brazil, Nepal, Uzbekistan, Papua New Guinea and Sierra Leone. Altogether, 38 countries were represented. Both student numbers and geographical spread were around 50 per cent up on figures for the 2000 event. The main sessions in 2001, alongside plenaries by leading figures in the field, and workshops and presentations by NGOs and agencies, consisted of talks and posters given by student delegates on their ongoing work. These presentations in turn attracted an audience of over 60 staff from 25 conservation organizations, several of which also supported the meeting financially, with major grants from Conservation International, English Nature and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

Feedback from students was extremely positive, with nearly 70 per cent rating the meeting as excellent, and 98 per cent wanting a similar conference next year. Accordingly, the third meeting in the series will be held in Cambridge on 25–27 March 2002, with Sir Robert May (the former UK Government Chief scientist, and now the President of the Royal Society) giving the opening plenary talk. For details of how to apply, visit the Conference website at <http://www.zoo.cam.ac.uk/SCCS/index.html>, from August 2001. A small number of bursaries will be available for students from developing countries and eastern Europe.

Andrew Balmford & Rhys Green  
Conservation Biology Group  
Department of Zoology, Downing Street  
Cambridge CB2 3EJ, UK  
E-mail: [apb12@hermes.cam.ac.uk](mailto:apb12@hermes.cam.ac.uk)

### Bat conservation receives a major boost

The cause of bat conservation worldwide has received a major boost with the publication of *Microchiropteran Bats. Global Status Survey and Conservation Action Plan* (Hutson, A.M., Mickleburgh, S.P. & Racey, P.A., compilers, 2001, IUCN/SSC Chiroptera Specialist Group,

IUCN, Gland). This is the culmination of 6 years work and has involved over 150 of the world's bat experts. The Plan summarizes the major conservation issues relating to the 835 species of microchiropteran bats. Together with *Old World Fruit Bats. An Action Plan for their Conservation* (Mickleburgh, S.P., Hutson, A.M. & Racey, P.A., eds, 1992, IUCN/SSC Chiroptera Specialist Group, IUCN, Gland), this represents the first comprehensive overview for this major mammalian group. Fauna & Flora International has been at the forefront of the process of compiling these documents and has funded the implementation of some of the key recommendations. The microchiropteran bat plan will be officially launched at the 12th International Bat Research Conference to be held in Kuala Lumpur, Malaysia in August 2001. At the same time, FFI and the IUCN-SSC Chiroptera Specialist Group will be promoting a strategy to tackle the major bat conservation issues.

Bats are found in all areas of the world except the Arctic and Antarctic regions and a few isolated islands. Major threats include habitat loss and modification, roost site disturbance, persecution and a general lack of information about their status, biology and ecology. These two Plans highlight these issues and detail solutions that need to be adopted at the local, national and international level.

Simon Mickleburgh  
Senior Conservation Researcher, Fauna & Flora International  
Great Eastern House, Tenison Road  
Cambridge CB1 2TT, UK  
E-mail: [simon.mickleburgh@fauna-flora.org](mailto:simon.mickleburgh@fauna-flora.org)

### Cross River Gorilla Workshop

A workshop on the conservation of the Cross River gorilla *Gorilla gorilla diehli* was held in Nigeria on 6–9 April 2001. It was organized by the Wildlife Conservation Society (WCS) and the Nigerian Conservation Foundation (NCF), with assistance from the management of Cross River National Park and a local NGO, Primates Preservation Group. The aim of the workshop was to formulate practical recommendations to improve the survival prospects of this very rare gorilla, which was recently described as being sufficiently different from other western gorilla populations to merit its recognition as a subspecies, a status it had early in the 20th century (Sarmiento & Oates, 2000). Field work in Cameroon and Nigeria over the last 15 years has found that these gorillas, which inhabit forested hills on the headwaters of the Cross River, are fragmented into at least eight subpopulations. These subpopulations may

have only tenuous contact with each other, and in some cases may be completely isolated.

At the end of the workshop, the participants released the following communique:

'The Cross River gorilla is internationally recognized as one of the most critically endangered animals in Africa. With a total world population of less than 250 individuals, it lives in a number of isolated mountains straddling the international border between Cross River State, Nigeria, and the South-west Province of Cameroon. Its survival will depend on urgent action to counter the threat of uncontrolled hunting, and the degradation and fragmentation of gorilla habitat resulting from expansion of human settlement and forest use.

Recognizing the perilous status of the Cross River gorilla, a group of 25 government officials and conservation experts from Nigeria, Cameroon and overseas gathered in Calabar for a workshop and conference from 6 to 9 April 2001. Participants acknowledged the importance of involving local communities in all conservation efforts, and identified the following priority needs for immediate action to save the gorillas:

- Improve effectiveness of antipoaching measures, and enforce other protected area laws.
- Strengthen endangered species and protected area laws where necessary.
- Conduct surveys to clarify gorilla distribution and identify core habitats.
- Provide legal protection for all core habitats.
- Secure and maintain forest corridors between core habitats.
- Establish measures for effective coordination of conservation across international borders.
- Undertake environmental education and awareness programmes targeting key officials, villagers and the general public.
- Provide incentives to encourage certain villages within protected-area enclaves to relocate.
- Develop and implement a plan for sustainable financing of gorilla conservation activities involving national governments and external funding sources.
- Carry out training and capacity building, particularly for protected-area staff and African primatologists and conservationists.
- Prepare and implement an eco-tourism development plan'.

The challenge now, for the government agencies, NGOs and scientists involved, is to implement these recommendations (which are not listed in order of importance). Fauna & Flora International is already working with Pandrillus (a local Nigerian NGO), NCF, WCS and the Cross River State Forestry Commission to bring better conservation to the new Afi Mountain

Wildlife Sanctuary, which was gazetted in May 2000 and protects one of the Nigerian subpopulations of the gorillas (Suter & Oates, 2000). Similar collaborative efforts are being developed for Nigeria's Cross River National Park and Cameroon's Takamanda Forest Reserve, and a broad survey programme is in place, sponsored by WCS, the Margot Marsh Biodiversity Foundation and the Whitley Foundation. One important outcome of the Calabar workshop was to establish a new framework for regular meetings between Cameroonian and Nigerian government officials and conservationists, and this will allow for the better coordination of conservation policies and actions.

J.F. Oates

Department of Anthropology, Hunter College of CUNY  
695 Park Avenue, New York, NY 10021, USA  
E-mail: john.oates@hunter.cuny.edu

#### References

- Sarmiento, E.E. & Oates, J.F. (2000) The Cross River gorillas: a distinct subspecies, *Gorilla gorilla diehli* Matschie 1904. *American Museum Novitates*, no. 3304.
- Suter, J. & Oates, J.F. (2000) Sanctuary in Nigeria for possible fourth subspecies of gorilla. *Oryx*, **34**, 71.

---

### The Whitley Award Scheme for international nature conservation

The winners of the Whitley Award Scheme for 2001 were announced on Wednesday 9 February 2001 by HRH The Princess Royal at the Royal Geographical Society, London. The Whitley award for International Nature Conservation (£50,000) was won by Alexander Peal, Society for the Conservation of Nature, Liberia, for his work in that country. He is responsible for setting up the only national park in the country and continues to work to save Liberia's large tracts of rainforest from logging, hunting and agriculture. He plans a public awareness campaign featuring the endangered pygmy hippo as a national flagship species. The Iris Darnton Award (£20,000) was won by Sean Privett, Walker Bay Fynbos Conservancy, Western Cape, South Africa. Sean has established the Walker Bay Fynbos Conservancy covering 13,000 ha of highly threatened lowland fynbos in the south-western corner of South Africa, including a number of rare and threatened species found nowhere else, and is working with 16 landowners to protect it. The Rufford Award (£20,000) was won by Vivek Menon, Wildlife Trust of India, who for the past decade has been at the forefront of the fight against organized wildlife crime and poaching in India. His present concern is the fresh wave of elephant poaching across India, and he intends to work with the government and

the general public to promote the conservation of Indian wildlife during this crisis.

The Wildinvest continuation award (£20,000) was made to previous winner Greg Rasmussen of Zimbabwe who works with the wild and increasingly rare African 'painted' dogs. These dogs have disappeared from 25 of the 39 countries in which they were originally recorded, and Rasmussen is trying to resolve the conflict between farmers and these dogs. He received a Rufford grant last year. Dr Damayanti Buchori, from Bogor, Indonesia, who won an Iris Darnton Award last year, has been awarded a Whitley Continuation Award of £20,000 for her work on insect conservation.

Further details on the Whitley Award Scheme is available from The Whitley Awards Foundation, 139 Elgin Crescent, London W11 2JH. Tel.: +44 (0)20 72297554; Fax: +44 (0)20 72297578; E-mail: info@whitleyaward.org; Web: <http://www.whitleyaward.org>

---

### **The BP Conservation Programme winners for 2001**

Twenty-one international student teams have won awards in this year's BP Conservation Programme. These awards will support ground-breaking research to safeguard some of the most endangered animals and habitats in the world – from the crested ibis in China and marbled duck in Dagestan to the giant otter in Bolivia and grassy fynbos heathlands of South Africa. Of the winning projects, 10 will be studying birds, three

studying primates, two studying amphibians and a further two are researching rare plant species. John Robinson, Senior Vice-President and Director of the International Conservation Programs of the Wildlife Conservation Society, presented the Awards at a ceremony held in London on Wednesday 25 April 2001.

Two gold awards of £7000 and £6000 were made, respectively, to teams that will work on the conservation of the neglected grassy fynbos of South Africa and on the conservation of marine turtles off the coast of Uruguay. Six silver awards of £5000–7000 were made, and 10 bronze awards of £3000–4000.

Three major awards were presented to the best 'follow-up' proposals submitted from past years' winning projects. The Follow-up Award winning teams will use their awards to continue research into three threatened duck species on the steppe and semi-desert lakes of the Caspian coast, Russia (£13,000), and the conservation of carnivores and primates of the Five-finger Mountains, Hainan Island, Southern China (£12,000). The top award of £20,000 was presented to a British-led team that will be carrying out vital research in the unprotected spiny forest of southern Madagascar. Since 1999, this project has forged strong links with major wildlife institutions in Madagascar as well with primary schools in Ifotaka and Durham.

Further information is available from Marianne Dunn, Programme Manager, BirdLife International, Wellbrook Court, Girton Road, Cambridge CB3 0NA, UK. Tel.: +44 (0)1223 277318; E-mail: [dunnM22@bp.com](mailto:dunnM22@bp.com)