

## INTERNATIONAL

**CITES update**

Vietnam and St Kitts-Nevis acceded to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora on 20 January and 14 February 1994, respectively. The accessions became effective on 20 April and 15 May, respectively, and bring the number of Parties to the Convention to 122.

Source: *TRAFFIC Bulletin*, 14 (2), 41.

**Seychelles leaves IWC**

The Seychelles Government has announced that it is withdrawing from the International Whaling Commission. Seychelles was at the forefront of the successful campaign to establish a whale sanctuary in the Indian Ocean but at last year's IWC meeting it took a stand against conservation. It voted in favour of granting Japan a coastal quota of minke whales, voted against conservation measures designed to manage the Japanese killing of striped dolphins and abandoned its previous support for the establishment of a Southern Ocean whale sanctuary.

Source: *Regar* (Seychelles), 1 April 1994.

**Turkey joins Ramsar**

Turkey has become the 81st Contracting Party to the Ramsar Convention and has proposed five sites for designation as Wetlands of International Importance: Goksu Delta, Burdur Lake, Seyfe Lake, Manyas Lake and Sultan Marshes.

Source: *International Wetland Research Bureau News*, No. 11, 2.

**Whale sanctuary on the way ...**

Japan and Norway, which opposed plans for a whale sanctuary around Antarctica, have now signed a statement along with 22 other members of the International Whaling Commission, saying they have 'no irreconcilable objections' to the sanctuary. The change of heart followed revelations that the Soviet Union had illegally killed thousands of whales in the Southern Ocean.

Source: *New Scientist*, 5 March 1994, 4.

**... and whaling scandal**

Revelations that the Soviet Union practised deception over its declared whaling catch over a period of 40 years has completely upset data upon which scientists have set recovery rates and potential sizes of great whale populations. The information makes it less likely that the IWC will bow to demands for the resumption of commercial whaling at its meeting in Mexico in May. At a special IWC meeting at Norfolk Island in February a Russian spokesman admitted that in 1961–62 the Soviet Union resumed hunting of right whales, which had been protected since 1930, and killed 1200 off Argentina. The Soviet fleet killed another 300 off Japan in 1965–66 and 1000 in the Sea of Okhotsk off Siberia. Russia also ignored protection of humpback and blue whales and disguised the carcasses of protected whales to pass them off as unprotected species. The Japanese appear to have been involved in the deception by transferring whale meat from Russian ships to their own at sea for cash.

Source: *Habitat*, March 1994, 1.

**Convention on Biological Diversity**

The Convention on Biological Diversity, which was opened for signature at Rio de Janeiro during the UN Conference on Environment and Development in 1992, has since been signed by 165 nations plus the European Community. The Convention required ratification by 30 countries before it could come into force and Mongolia's ratification on 30 September 1993 meant that it became effective on 29 December 93. The 1st Conference of the Parties is expected to be from 28 November to 9 December 1994.

Source: *Our Planet*, 5 (6), 8.

**Temperate forests outside scope of international timber agreement**

Efforts to expand the scope of International Tropical Timber Agreement (ITTA) to include sustainable management of timber from temperate and boreal sources by the year 2000 has failed. The final negotiations for a successor agreement to the ITTA took place in January and delegates from temperate consumer countries resisted pressure to include their forests under the terms of the Agreement and instead expressed their intentions to manage them sustainably by the year 2000 outside the ITTO forum.

Source: *TRAFFIC Bulletin*, 14 (2), 74.

**UV to blame for amphibian decline?**

Higher levels of ultraviolet radiation penetrating the Earth's dwindling ozone layer may explain the decline of some species of amphibians. Research in Oregon, USA, has

shown that natural levels of UVB radiation kill the eggs of some species but leave others unharmed. Three clumps of eggs from each of three amphibian species native to Oregon were placed in natural conditions. One clump was covered with a UV filter, a second with a control screen and a third left in the sun. The eggs of the western toad *Bufo boreas* and the cascades frog *Rana cascadae*, both of which are declining, were susceptible to sunlight: more of their eggs survived when UV radiation was blocked. In contrast, eggs of the Pacific tree frog *Hyla regilla*, which is not declining, were not damaged by sunlight. *Source: New Scientist*, 5 March 1994, 7.

### Radioactive waste banned from seas

The dumping into the sea of low-level radioactive waste and industrial waste (materials generated by manufacturing or processing operations), is to be banned under the London Convention (Convention on the Prevention of Marine Pollution of Dumping of Wastes and Other Matter, 1972). The Convention, which has been adopted by 71 countries, already bans the dumping into the sea of high-level radioactive wastes. The decisions were made at the 16th Consultative Meeting, which also banned the incineration at sea of industrial waste. *Source: Marine Pollution Bulletin*, 28 (1), 3.

### Systematics needs funding

A committee set up by the world's major systematics societies has called for a 25-year programme to bolster taxonomic studies. It estimates that the cost will be \$US3 billion a

year, six times what the world currently spends, but says it is essential to planning efforts to protect the Earth's biodiversity. To date scientists have described about 1.5 million species of the estimated 10 to 100 million species believed to exist. To protect them effectively, systematists need to fill in huge gaps, concentrating on biodiversity 'hotspots' and on poorly known groups such as fungi and bacteria. The systematics agenda also includes studying how species are related evolutionarily so that the maximum number of lineages can be preserved. *Source: New Scientist*, 5 March 1994, 12.

## EUROPE AND NORTH AFRICA

### Russia's Arctic park

Russia has created one of the world's largest marine parks. It covers 42,000 sq km around Franz Josef Land, a group of islands in the Barents Sea, a biologically very productive area. There are 68 large seabird colonies on the islands and endangered bowhead whales *Balaena mysticetus* feed there. *Source: New Scientist*, 14 May 1994, 13.

### Hunting endangered species

A booming new business in hunt tourism is threatening endangered species in Turkmenistan. The Minister of Nature Use and Environmental Protection issued a resolution on the Opening of an International Hunt for 1993–1994, which permitted foreign hunters to hunt endangered species and ordered the Department for the

Protection of Fauna and Flora and Use of Natural Resources to co-operate with and assist foreign hunters, arrange their visas and help them obtain licences to export trophies out of Turkmenistan. There are no hunting seasons and no bag limits. Nature reserves were ordered to turn over their vehicles and drivers for the hunters, even though human presence is not normally allowed in reserves. Similar hunting ventures are under way in Uzbekistan and other central Asian republics, none of which has become party to CITES since the dissolution of the USSR. *Source: Animal Welfare Institute Quarterly*, 42 (4), 7

### Green plan for Finland's forestry

A proposed environmental programme for forestry in Finland would cease peatland drainage by the end of 1996. Drainage has already destroyed 60,000 sq km of bogs and mires in an attempt to turn them into productive forest land. Legislation is being prepared under which the preservation of biodiversity is set as a major goal of modern forestry. *Source: Suomen Luonto*, 4/94, 58.

### Denmark's new legislation

Denmark's new Act for Nature Protection came into force on 1 July 1993. It synthesizes and simplifies three former acts and strengthens the protection of nature in Denmark, particularly by developing the protection of habitat types. *Source: Ramsar*, No. 17, 2.

### Measures to protect Denmark's otters

Stop grids that fit into the end of the first fyke funnel of fish

traps have been used by experienced Danish trap-fishers since 1986 and have been successful in reducing otter *Lutra lutra* mortalities. From 1 January 1991 all trap-fishers using fish traps in otter habitats have been required to use stop grids and from April 1994 this law was extended to cover trap-fishers in freshwater in the whole of Denmark and trap-fishers in certain fiords.

Source: IUCN Otter Specialist Group Bulletin, No. 9, 13.

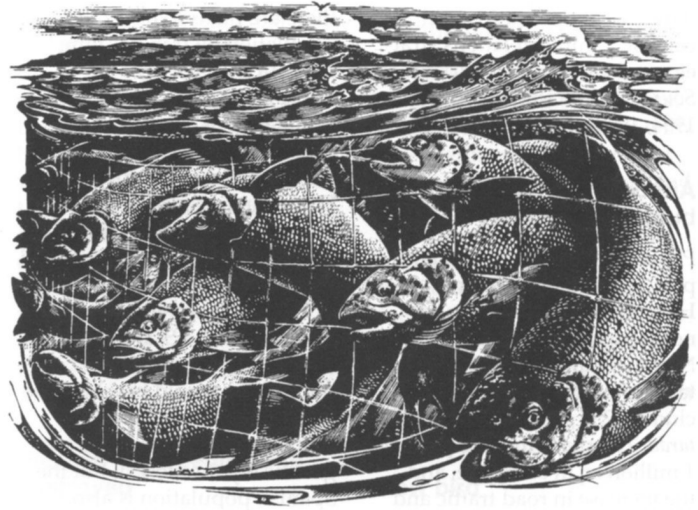
### Dog whelk recovery

The numbers of dog whelks *Nucella lapillus* suffering from imposex (a condition in which male characters become imposed on the genitalia of females, causing sterilization and premature death) has decreased on the Isle of Cumbrae in Scotland since 1988. In addition, at one site where dog whelks were absent in 1988, they were abundant in 1992–93. The improvement appears to be due to reductions in levels of tributyltin compounds from antifouling paints on boat hulls following the introduction of regulations in 1987 prohibiting their use on boats less than 25 m in length.

Source: *Marine Pollution Bulletin*, 28 (1), 15–17.

### Appeal for British salmon

Drift-netting for Atlantic salmon has been banned by every salmon-producing country in the North Atlantic except England, Northern Ireland and Wales. Drift-netters off the British coast take 100,000 salmon each year. Most of these fish are heading north to the Scottish rivers where they hatched and which are already depleted. Scotland banned drift-nets in 1962. Instead of a ban, Britain's Ministry of



A campaign has started to save stocks of wild British salmon. Thousands are caught in drift nets off the British coast each year.

Agriculture, Fisheries and Food (MAFF) is supporting a drift-net phase-out scheme, which could take 30 years. The British Wild Salmon Appeal is running a campaign to try to make MAFF take more drastic action. Source: The British Wild Salmon Appeal, PO Box 406, London WC1E 6JU, UK.

### Upset over Norway's geese

A Scottish Office decision to allow a farmer in Scotland to shoot protected barnacle geese *Branta leucopsis* on his land has been met with protest in Norway where the birds breed. The Norwegian Ornithological Society is now pressing for the Norwegian Government to make an official complaint. Source: *The Guardian*, 18 March 1994.

### Pine martens vanish from England

The pine marten *Martes martes* may have disappeared from England, although it appears to be on the increase in Scotland. A recent survey found no signs

of the species in two counties – Cumbria and Northumberland – where it still occurred in the 1980s. English Nature is investigating the cause of species's disappearance and considering whether to reintroduce it. Some farming and field sports organizations have expressed concern about the possible effects of reintroducing an animal that might prey on game birds.

Source: *English Nature news release*, 21 March 1994.

### Planning for wolf comeback in Germany

Wolves are making a comeback in Europe, and Brandenburg, Germany's most easterly state, is drawing up the continent's first management plan for the animals. Issues under consideration include the evaluation of habitats suitable for wolves and the zoning of Brandenburg into areas where wolves are and are not welcome. The plan, which is being developed by the Munich Wildlife Society and the local Ministry of the Environment, also includes measures for preventing

damage, compensation and control, a public relations strategy and a policy for tourism.

Source: *New Scientist*, 2 April 1994, 19–21.

### Airport threatens great bustard in Hungary

Plans for an international airport at Kiskunlacháza in Hungary are threatening the northern part of Kiskunság National Park. The steppe habitat is important for wildlife, including 250 great bustards *Otis tarda*. The plans involve paving 1 million sq m of steppe, and the increase in road traffic and noise levels are causing conservationists great concern.

Source: *World Birdwatch*, 15 (4), 5.

### Turtles continue to die in Zakynthos

Boating regulations designed to protect turtles in Laganas Bay on the island of Zakynthos, Greece, are not being enforced and turtles are being killed as a result. In 1993, nine dead loggerhead turtles *Caretta caretta* were reported – all with injuries inflicted by speed-boat propellers. In previous years only two or three turtles were found dead. The Sea Turtle Protection Society of Greece, which fears that many turtles die unreported, stepped up its campaign to remove speed-boats from the bay. Speed-boat owners attacked conservationists but local people who depend on tourism for their livelihoods are now also opposing the boat operators and a joint effort is being made to stop speed-boats using the bay.

Source: *Turtle Tracks*, 5, 2.

### Bear translocation plan

There are believed to be only eight brown bears *Ursus arctos* left in the French Pyrenees and

there are plans to boost the population by translocating bears from elsewhere in Europe. Analysis of mitochondrial DNA of bears from 15 European countries revealed that there are two main European lineages: an eastern group, represented mainly by large populations in Russia and Romania, and a western group in France, Spain, Italy, former Yugoslavia and Scandinavia. Reinforcing the Pyrenean population would best be done with bears from Spain or Scandinavia because they are genetically the closest, but the Spanish population is also threatened and there may not be enough bears in Scandinavia, so bears from Bulgaria may be used.

Source: *New Scientist*, 12 March 1994, 8–9.

### Most Cypriots want to ban spring shoot

The 2-week spring shoot of migrant birds in Cyprus, which was reintroduced in 1993 after a 2-year ban, should be stopped, according to nine out of ten Cypriots, including 77 per cent of hunters. Spring shooting of migrants is outlawed by the Bern Convention, to which Cyprus is a signatory. In theory, spring shooting is restricted to turtle doves *Streptopelia turtur*, whose numbers are plummeting, but in practice hunters shoot any bird, including birds of prey.

Source: *BBC Wildlife*, April 1994, 55.

### Freira's successful breeding season

The endemic Madeira freira *Pterodroma madeira*, Europe's most threatened breeding seabird, had its most successful breeding season for many years in 1993, with a record eight

chicks fledging. The bird breeds only in the high mountains of Madeira and has an estimated breeding population of 20–30 pairs. It declined through severe predation from rats, cats and humans, and the Freira Conservation Project has been wardening the breeding area and controlling rats and cats.

Source: *World Birdwatch*, 16 (1), 2.

### Climbers help ibis

Six climbers from the British Mountaineering Council visited Morocco to enlarge rock ledges and make new ones in cliffs at Souss Massa National Park, where the last known colonies of the northern bald ibis *Geronticus eremita* occur. Once distributed across southern Europe, North Africa and the Near East, only 400 individuals remain, almost all in Morocco. It is believed that lack of suitable nesting ledges may be at least partially responsible for the species's decline because traditional nesting ledges have disappeared through erosion.

Source: *World Birdwatch*, 16 (1), 5.

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## AFRICA

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### New colobus subspecies in Niger Delta?

A newly discovered population of red colobus monkey *Colobus badia* (called *epieni* by local people) in the Niger Delta might be a new subspecies. The nearest known population is the endangered Preuss's colobus in forests on the Nigeria–Cameroon border 240 km to the east. The new colobus differs from Preuss's colobus in having long white cheek whiskers and a white chin and throat. It appears to occupy an area of about 1550 sq km and is probably vulnerable



and declining in numbers: in the last 20 years the area it inhabits has been opened up by oil exploration and extraction, and hunting and logging have increased. Two areas of swamp forest where the colobus occurs have been proposed as reserves, people in the small town of Ganraun have agreed to protect forest nearby and have banned hunting the monkey, and The Shell Petroleum Development Company in Port Harcourt said that it might support conservation work.

Source: *African Wildlife Update*, March–April 1994, 4.

### Future bright for Senegal's elephants

Senegal's last elephant population, in Niokolo Koba National Park, appears to have a brighter future thanks to successful antipoaching measures. None was poached in 1992 and 1993 and, while two elephants died of natural causes during 1993, at least three calves were born. There were around 450 elephants in 1960 but poaching reduced numbers to 28 in 1991. Source: *African Wildlife Update*, 3 (1), 3.

### Debt-for-logs swap

In a bizarre reversal of the debt-for-nature swaps of the late 1980s, under which the debt of developing countries was cancelled in return for agreements to protect forests, France has agreed to cancel part of the debt it is owed by Cameroon in return for French companies being given almost exclusive access to Cameroon's forests. France will cancel a further part of the debt if Cameroon agrees to double the amount of forest available for logging by non-state companies. Cameroon has some 220,000 sq km of forest,

roughly half of what it had a few decades ago. Much of the country's south-eastern forests remain intact, but a Tropical Forestry Action Plan drawn up by the Cameroon Government with UN agencies in 1990 set a target that would turn the country into Africa's biggest exporter of timber by the year 2000. The plan involves building roads into the remote south-east.

Source: *New Scientist*, 29 January 1994, 7.

### Picathartes breeding site destroyed

The forest surrounding one of only two known white-necked picathartes *Picathartes gymnocephalus* colonies in Ivory Coast has been converted to a banana plantation. The site, near the Station Ecologique de Lamto, was known to contain at least 18 nests. This globally threatened species is suffering from extensive forest clearance in its range, from Ghana to Guinea, particularly because it needs large rocks or caves surrounded by forest for nesting.

Source: *World Birdwatch*, 16 (1) 2.

### New park in Congo

The Republic of Congo has adopted a decree designating nearly 4050 sq km in the north as Nouabale–Ndoki National Park. The rain forest is rich in wildlife and has no human residents. To date there has been very little human activity there but logging intensified on surrounding lands during the mid-1980s. The park adjoins Central Africa Republic's Dzanga–Ndoki National Park (designated in 1990) and a large forested region, Lobeke, in Cameroon, which is being considered for protection.

Source: *African Wildlife Update*, 3 (1), 1.

### Elephant birth control

Three female elephants in Sweetwaters Rhino Sanctuary, Kenya, have been injected with an experimental birth-control vaccine. Each elephant had had at least two calves and was nursing one at the time of the injection. The vaccine is expected to bring on an early menopause. The sanctuary currently has about 50 elephants more than it can sustain.

Source: *African Wildlife Update*, 3 (1), 3.

### New bird

A new genus and species of pheasant discovered in Tanzania's Udzungwa Mountains in 1991 has been described and named *Xenoperdix udzungwensis*. It was first thought to be an unusual type of francolin but it is closer to the hill-partridges from the evergreen forests that stretch across the foot of the Himalaya to southern China.

Source: *Ibis*, 136, 2–11.

### Tanzania wild bird plans

Tanzania has published a management plan for its wild birds. Its main aims are: to increase or maintain numbers of each bird species, with special regard to endemic species; to produce a sustainable harvest of bird species in which it is appropriate to trade; to initiate use through captive-breeding programmes for appropriate key species; to conduct any trade in live birds in a humane manner; and to manage birds where appropriate for the benefit of local communities. More stringent regulations will define numbers of appropriate species available for trade and the Wildlife Department will issue an annual quota for appropriate species of bird caught for

the trade, which will be divided equally between licensed traders. Tanzania has reduced the number of ports for export of birds to Kilimanjaro and Dar Es Salaam airports.  
 Source: *TRAFFIC Bulletin*, 14 (2), 47.

### Dam threatens community wildlife programme

A proposed dam on the Ruvu River on the north-eastern boundary of the Selous Game Reserve would flood 186 sq km of valuable wildlife habitat in a buffer zone and threaten a promising community wildlife programme involving 600 villagers. Under the programme villagers receive annual quotas for subsistence hunting and the result has been reduced poaching and the maintenance of wildlife habitat outside the boundaries of the Selous. Employment opportunities have also increased and the reserve is allowed to keep 50 per cent of revenues, most of which come from safari hunting.  
 Source: *African Wildlife Update*, March–April 1994, 1 & 8.

### Rare plant site bulldozed

The site of the last remaining wild population of *Erica bolusiae* has been bulldozed. The Kraaifontein East area (formerly Kraaifontein Forest Reserve) is of exceptional botanical significance, supporting over 200 plant species, many of them endemic and many threatened. Botanists had been working to conserve 15 ha as a reserve but the Cape Provincial Administration Roads and Traffic Branch bulldozed the site, claiming that it had to be cleared to prevent flooding. A team from the Botanical Society of South Africa is now drawing up a Structure Plan for land in the

Kraaifontein East area whose future has not been decided  
 Source: *Veld & Flora*, 79 (4), 99.

### Cedar conservation

The Clanwilliam cedar *Widdringtonia cedarbergensis* grows only in the Cedarberg mountains of the south-western Cape, South Africa, where it is declining and where there is little natural regeneration. The recent decline is due to fires and past over-exploitation but it is also possible that the current climate is less favourable for the species than it was in cooler glacial times 12,000 years ago. A conservation programme is in place in a 5252-ha Cedar Reserve, which encompasses approximately 21 per cent of the current cedar distribution. Here the vegetation is burnt in late autumn/early winter to help prevent hot, midsummer wild fires, and several thousand nursery-grown seedlings are planted each May in carefully chosen sites near rocks, where the shade and shelter enhances their growth and, it is hoped, will give protection from fire.  
 Source: *Veld & Flora*, 79 (4), 114–117.

### St Lucia saved

Plans to mine for titanium in the dunes around St Lucia in northern coastal Natal, South Africa, have been overturned by the government. A storm of public protest forced Richards Bay Minerals (owned by Rio Tinto Zinc Corporation) to commission a second environmental-impact assessment and, while this concluded that the mining would not cause lasting environmental damage, a government commission appointed to look at the case advised against the scheme, recommending instead that

ecotourism be developed with local people as partners and prime beneficiaries.  
 Source: *BBC Wildlife*, March 1994, 55.

### Milkweed rediscovery

*Ceropegia stentiae*, a milkweed of the Asclepiadaceae, has been rediscovered 57 years after it was first collected in the Waterberg, South Africa and on a farm near Naboomspruit. The species has disappeared from these sites and the new finds of three populations on the Pietersburg Plateau were threatened. Two have been destroyed by housing development and the third is on an overgrazed area belonging to the municipality of Pietersburg. Seed has been collected and resultant plants will be introduced into a similar habitat in the Pietersburg Game Reserve.  
 Source: *Veld & Flora*, 79 (4), 120.

### Malawi regains rhinos

Black rhinos *Diceros bicornis* have been reintroduced into Malawi, where the species has been extinct since the early 1990s. One male and one female, both 4 years old and both from Kruger National Park in South Africa, were released into Liwonde National Park, which is situated far from Malawi's international borders and, it is hoped, from poachers. More reintroductions are planned in Liwonde.  
 Source: *African Wildlife Update*, 3 (1), 8.

### First captive breeding of sifaka

A golden-crowned sifaka *Propithecus tattersalli* has been born in captivity for the first time. The Primate Breeding Center at Duke University, North Carolina, USA, is the

only place to have captive golden-crowned sifakas. Its director, Elwyn Simons, discovered the species in 1987. The forest habitat in north-east Madagascar is rapidly disappearing and unless something is done the sifaka's chances of survival in the wild are slight. *Source: New Scientist*, 5 March 1994, 8

### Red owl discovered

A Madagascar red owl *Tyto soumagnei*, which has been recorded only once since 1934, has been found in captivity in the town of Andapa. The bird was reportedly captured almost 300 km north of any previous sightings.

*Source: World Birdwatch*, 16 (1), 3.

### Taita falcon plan

A captive-breeding programme has started in Zimbabwe for the Taita falcon *Falco fasciinucha* using offspring of birds sent from Africa to the USA in the mid-1980s as well as wild-caught Zimbabwean birds. The long-term aim is to make releases to augment wild populations but first a large captive population must be built up. *Source: African Wildlife Update*, 3 (1), 5.

### Magpie-robin population increase

A recovery programme launched in July 1990 for the Seychelles magpie-robin *Copsychus sechellarum* has resulted in 40 birds – an 82 per cent population increase. The species survives only on Fregate Island, having disappeared from the rest of its former range largely because of introduced cats and rats. Fregate Island has neither predator but the species's woodland habitat has largely

disappeared. The recovery team cleared scrub, planted native trees and provided supplementary food and nest sites to maintain and increase the population in the short term. Reintroduction of the magpie-robin to a second predator-free island is being considered.

*Source: World Birdwatch*, 15 (4), 2.

## ASIA (EXCLUDING INDO-MALAYA)

### Mongolian antelopes declining

Populations of the three antelope species that occur in Mongolia have undergone serious declines in recent years. The Mongolian saiga *Saiga tatarica mongolica* now numbers only 300 and the last small herds live in an inaccessible basin in the northern Gobi–Altai. The Dsungarian and Transaltai–Gobi populations are extinct. There are no reliable figures for populations of the goitred gazelle *Gazella subgutturosa* but numbers are declining. The Mongolian gazelle *Procapra gutturosa* is still numerous, with perhaps 300,000 animals remaining, but it has become extinct in some areas and is intensively hunted. Herds are dazzled with spotlights and shot indiscriminately for the meat, which is consumed locally and exported to Europe, and the horns, which are exported to South East Asia, where they are being used to replace rhino horn. It will not be able to sustain the illegal hunting levels for long but political upheaval and the lack of wildlife rangers make conservation difficult.

*Source: Gnuletter*, 12 (3), 16.

### China burns tiger bones

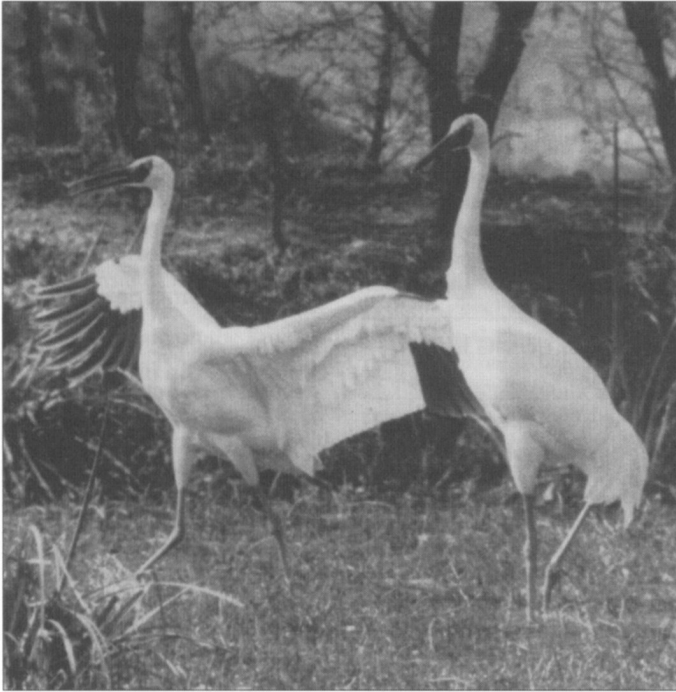
In demonstration of its resolve to discourage trade in tiger bones, officials in Harbin, north-east China, burnt 500 kg of tiger bones in January. The bones had been confiscated from some 100 street stalls selling traditional medicines. *Source: TRAFFIC Bulletin*, 14 (2), 42.

### Gibbon on the brink

The large population of Hainan black-crested gibbons *Hylobates concolor hainanus* that once inhabited Hainan Island, China, is on the brink of extinction because of deforestation and poaching. Only 15 individuals remain, all in Bawanglin Nature Reserve, according to a 1993 survey. Reserves have been neglected in the past few years while Hainan Island made the transition to an independent province and special economic zone. However, the survey results created a greater awareness of the gibbon in central and local government and a proposed action plan has been presented to the Office of Chinese Wildlife Protection. *Source: Asian Primates*, 3 (3) & 3 (4), 3.

### Tortoiseshell trade ceases

The commercial international trade in tortoiseshell stopped in 1993 when Japan maintained a zero quota on imports of the shell of the hawksbill turtle *Eretmochelys imbricata*. The domestic trade of tortoiseshell products is still legal in Japan under certain conditions and it is not known how much tortoiseshell is stockpiled by the industry. Japan has been gradually reducing imports of tortoiseshell since 1980 and has set up a financial programme to compensate the industry and



Siberian cranes *Grus leucogeranus* at Bharatpur Wildlife Sanctuary, India. None appeared last winter and it is feared that the flock that once wintered there is extinct (WWF/Sture Karlsson).

workers. Japan has promised to drop its sea turtle reservations on the CITES Appendix 1 hawksbill and olive ridley turtle *Lepidochelys olivacea* before the Ninth Meeting of the Conferences of the Parties to CITES in 1994.

Source: TRAFFIC USA, 13 (1), 9–10.

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## INDO-MALAYA

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### Indian's Siberian crane flock extinct

The flock of Siberian cranes *Grus leucogeranus* that once wintered in India's Bharatpur sanctuary is extinct. There were 200 birds in 1960, 125 in 1965, 38 in 1982, 6 in 1992 and none in the winter of 1993–94. The Bharatpur cranes are believed to have been victims of hunting

along their migration route over Pakistan and Afghanistan. Six captive-bred Siberian cranes, which were released prior to the expected arrival of the wild migrants (*Oryx*, 28 (2), 90–91), mingled with common cranes *Grus grus* over the winter but showed no inclination to migrate north with them in the spring. The next step in the attempt to restore the flock will be to raise Siberian chicks with common cranes as surrogate parents to see if they will follow them on migration.

Sources: BBC Wildlife, April 1994, 59; *New Scientist*, 14 May 1994, 10–11.

### India's tigers down

India has completed an emergency national census of tiger numbers. A preliminary analysis suggests a population of 2750–3750 animals. The pre-

vious census in 1989 showed a maximum figure of 4334. The Indian Government has set up Tiger Crisis Cell, chaired by the Minister for Forests and the Environment, to spearhead conservation initiatives. Plans include an antipoaching strike force and an intelligence-gathering network. Ten nations that still have tigers discussed their protection at the first meeting of the new Global Tiger Forum in Delhi on 3–4 March. China, North Korea and Laos did not attend.

Source: BBC Wildlife, April 1994, 57.

### Gazelle sanctuary to be denotified

The Indian gazelle *Gazella benetti*, is under threat in its last stronghold, the Indian (Thar) Desert. The population has declined drastically in certain areas, probably due to poaching and 3 years of drought. The Gujarat State Government is also proposing the denotification of the Narayansarovar Sanctuary in the Kutch region. Its 765 sq km contain the single largest Indian gazelle population (1400 individuals) in the country and also many other rare species. The State Government's action is illegal but it appears prepared to forge ahead to pave the way for limestone mining and cement factories.

Source: *Gnusletter*, 12 (3), 14–15.

### Legal challenge to development near turtle beach

The construction of four new fishing quays near the Bhitarkanika Turtle Sanctuary at Gahirmatha in Orissa, India, (see *Oryx*, 28 (2), 91) is being challenged in the courts by a local group, the Centre for Environmental Law. The group



says that the Orissa State Government is breaking its own fisheries regulations and contravening the federal government's forest conservation act, which protects the sanctuary. Around 2000 fishermen are already active in the area and shrimp, prawns and fish are exported to Japan, Europe, the USA and South East Asia. Conservationists say that this level of fishing is already destroying riverine and estuarine fauna. According to sanctuary officials about 2000 turtles die each year from injuries caused by trawlers and fishing nets.

Source: *New Scientist*, 2 April 1994, 7.

### Crane reserve upgraded

The Tram Chim Protected Area, which was a provincial nature reserve, was upgraded to a national nature reserve by the Vietnamese Government in February. Tram Chim was destroyed in the Vietnam War but has been restored, largely due to the efforts of provincial leader, Nguyen Xuan Truong, helped by the International Crane Foundation, and volunteers. Eastern sarus cranes *Grus antigone sharpii*, which disappeared in the war, have now returned in large numbers.

Source: *The ICF Bugle*, February 1994, 1 & 6.

### Mekong Delta destroyed for shrimp farms

The Mekong Delta in Vietnam, once the world's largest mangrove forest, is being destroyed. People are clearing large areas, eager to profit from a boom in the tiger prawn industry; some are building homes up to 5 km into what is at present sea to stake claims to rapidly accreting land. The shrimp farms

spell disaster for the birds of the delta – not only is the habitat disappearing but the settlers are taking nestlings.

Source: *World Birdwatch*, 15 (4), 4.

### Francois's monkey on Cat Ba Island

*Presbytis (Trachypithecus) francoisi poliocephalus*, a subspecies of François's monkey now known only from the national park on Cat Ba Island, Vietnam, probably numbers fewer than 200. With encroachment of the human population and the continuing hunting of the monkeys for medicinal purposes the population is bound to decline further unless effective education programmes are put in place.

Source: *Asian Primates*, 3 (3) & 3 (4), 16–20.

### Bird rediscovered in proposed national park

The grey-crowned crocias *Crocias langbianis* has been rediscovered after 57 years in evergreen forest at Chu Lang Sin in southern Vietnam. The area has been proposed as a national park and a survey has confirmed its exceptional biological importance.

Source: *World Birdwatch*, 16 (1), 2.

### Improving fish stocks on Philippine reefs

Stocks of coral reef fishes are increasing in some areas in the Philippines as a result of a project to find environmentally, economically and socially sustainable alternatives to destructive fishing techniques. The project, run jointly by Canada-based Ocean Voice International and the Haribon Foundation for Conservation of Natural Resources in Manila, is training aquarium fish collectors to net fish rather than stun

them with cyanide and is introducing the harvesting of new products from the ocean – for example, seaweeds and fish prints for tourists. Aquarium fish collectors in three provinces have recently formed co-operatives and these have joined to form the Marine Aquarium Fish Collectors Federation, through which fishermen will be able to import nets free of duty and market their fish without being obliged to purchase cyanide from fish buyers and operators.

Source: *Sea Wind*, 7 (3), 2–7.

### Philippines bans primate exports

The Philippines has announced that with effect from 1994 it will no longer permit the export of wild-caught primates.

Source: *TRAFFIC Bulletin*, 14 (2), 54.

### Indonesia bans export of some primates

Indonesia has banned the export of wild-caught macaques *Macaca fascicularis* and pigtail macaques *M. nemestrina* because their populations are declining. Export quotas will be allocated for captive-bred animals based on the success of breeding programmes.

Source: *Asian Primates*, 3 (3) & 3 (4), 7.

### Saving seagrass

Construction work for the new airport on Lantau Island has threatened the survival of one of only two known populations of the seagrass *Zostera nana* in Hong Kong. Dredging work less than 1 km away from the seagrass bed has contaminated it with silt and reduced its area to less than 15 per cent of the original. Mitigation measures are being implemented,

including the installation of a silt curtain and a laboratory stock of the plant will be used for transplants to other sites in Hong Kong as well as reintroduction to the original site when the airport project is completed.

Source: *Marine Pollution Bulletin*, 28 (4), 196.

### Hong Kong tightens up wildlife trade

On 27 January Hong Kong announced that tighter controls would be imposed on trade in all medicines that contain or purport to contain tiger products. Wildlife legislation will also be amended to control trade in a number of other species including the American black bear *Ursus americanus*.  
Source: *TRAFFIC Bulletin* 14 (2), 42.

## NORTH AMERICA

### Canadian cod stocks depleted

Cod stocks on the Grand Banks off Canada are less than one-quarter the size of a few years ago. No fishing of the cod will be allowed for the time being to allow fish stocks to recover. The stocks straddle Canada's 200-mile (322-km) limit and there is particular concern over fishing vessels registered in countries outside the North-West Atlantic Fisheries Organization (NAFO) because they operate outside its regulations and quotas.

Source: *Marine Pollution Bulletin*, 28 (4), 197.

### New park in British Columbia

The British Columbia provincial government has created the province's sixth largest park.

Ts'yl-os Provincial Park is 250 km north of Vancouver in the Chilcotin region and its 2332 sq km protect grizzly bears *Ursus arctos* and California bighorn sheep *Ovis canadensis* as well as the largest sockeye salmon run in the province. In creating the park, the government had to acquire mining rights: mining industry representatives agreed to relinquish claims in exchange for opening other high-mineral-potential zones to development outside the park.  
Source: *Nature Alert*, 4 (2), 4.

### Colorado River to be partly restored

Four species of fish endemic to the Colorado River system – the Colorado River squawfish *Ptychocheilus lucius*, the bony-tailed chub *Gila elegans*, the razorback sucker *Xyrauchen texanus* and the humpback chub *Gila cypha* – are expected to benefit from a US Fish and Wildlife Service 5-year recovery action plan, which calls for protecting river flows, building fish passageways around dams and releasing hatchery-reared fish into the wild. In addition, the US Administration has announced new controls on the Glen Canyon Dam, whose operation has interfered with the flow of the Colorado River for 30 years. Dramatic changes in water level will no longer be allowed and, while it will not be possible to restore the river completely, the new measures will go a long way towards mitigating the effects of the dam.

Source: *Endangered Species Technical Bulletin*, XIX (1), 18–19; *National Parks*, March/April 1994, 10.

### Two more endangered fish

The US Fish and Wildlife Service has classified two

species of freshwater fish with restricted ranges as endangered: the relict darter *Etheostoma chienense*, endemic to the Bayou du Chien drainage in western Kentucky and the bluemask darter *Etheostoma* sp., yet to be formally described, endemic to the Caney Fork River system in central Tennessee. Both are threatened by water quality degradation and habitat alteration.

Source: *Endangered Species Technical Bulletin*, XIX (2), 9.

### Disease in sea otters

Out of 22 southern sea otters *Enhydra lutris nereis* found dead in California in 1992, 10 had died because of infectious or parasitic diseases – an unusually high proportion compared with other endangered taxa. The growth rate of the California sea otter populations is well below that of most of the populations in Washington, Alaska and Canada.

Source: *Endangered Species Technical Bulletin*, XIX (1), 19–20.

### Condors recaptured

In March three 2-year-old California condors *Gymnogyps californianus* deserted their new sanctuary in Lion Canyon, Santa Barbara County, and returned to the Sespe Condor Sanctuary, where four reintroduced condors had died (see *Oryx*, 28 [2], 94). The birds were recaptured and returned to Los Angeles Zoo. Six other released birds appear to be established in Lion Canyon.

Source: *Zooscape*, May 1994, 1.

### Species given protection

Two species of plant, a snake and a fish have been protected under the US Endangered Species Act. The endangered

star cactus *Astrophytum asterias*, native to the Lower Rio Grande Valley, is now restricted to two sites – one in Starr County, Texas, and one in Tamaulipas, Mexico – because of habitat modification and collecting.

The beach *Jacquemontia Jacquemontia reclinata*, a perennial vine endemic to the coastal barrier islands in south-east Florida, has been listed as endangered because most of its habitat has been destroyed by urban development. The giant garter snake *Thamnophis gigas* has been listed as threatened because of habitat loss and the effects of introduced predators in California. The Oregon chub *Oregonichthys crameri* historically inhabited water bodies in the Willamette River drainage in Oregon but dam construction has eliminated it from 98 per cent of its former range and it now survives only in a 30-km stretch of the Middle Fork Willamette River system. It has been listed as endangered. *Source: Endangered Species Technical Bulletin, XIX (1), 17.*

### Juvenile turtles ingest man-made debris ...

Examination of the digestive tracts of 51 sea turtles washed ashore on Florida's coast found that 25 contained anthropogenic debris: plastic, monofilament line, fish-hooks, rubber, aluminium foil and tar. The mass and volume of debris was not great but even small quantities can kill: at least two turtles in the study had died as a result of ingesting debris.

*Source: Bjorndal, K.A., Bolten, A.B. and Lagueux, C.J. Marine Pollution Bulletin, March 1994, 154–158.*

### ... and consume tar

Dr Blair Witherington captured 160 post-hatchling loggerhead

turtles *Caretta caretta* during 15 trips ranging from 6 to 40 nautical miles offshore at two sites, Cape Canaveral and Sebastian Inlet, Brevard County, Florida. The turtles end up in a narrow band of floating sargassum weed and debris between 10 and 60 km offshore, bordering the western edge of the Gulf Stream, which carries the turtles north on the first leg of their journey around the Atlantic. These frontal zones are heavily contaminated with tar balls and plastic debris. Washing out the turtles' stomachs revealed that 51 per cent contained tar and 30 per cent plastics. Tar clogging up the digestive tracts could be causing the deaths of hundreds of thousands of turtles a year. *Source: Marine Turtle Newsletter, No. 64, 30.*

### More Hawaiian plants declared endangered

The US Fish and Wildlife Service has declared 11 plants native to the Ko'olau Mountains of O'ahu and 24 plants from Kaua'i as endangered or threatened. On both islands the main reasons for the plants' status are habitat degradation caused by pigs and competition with introduced plant species. On a brighter note, 13 species of plants believed to be extinct have been rediscovered. *Source: 'Elepaio, 54 (5), 28.*

## CENTRAL AMERICA

### Oil pollution linked with mutant mangroves

The results of a recent study suggest that the biota of oil-polluted habitats may be experiencing increased rates of mutation. A genetic investi-

gation of mangrove populations on the south-west coast of Puerto Rico found that the frequency of trees heterozygous for nuclear chlorophyll-deficient mutations was strongly correlated with concentrations of polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in the underlying sediment and with acute and chronic petroleum pollution. *Source: Marine Pollution Bulletin, March 1994, 166–169.*

### Stronghold for jabiru stork in Nicaragua

A survey of the Miskito Coast Protected Area on the Atlantic coast of north-eastern Nicaragua showed the area to be one of the few strongholds of the jabiru stork *Jabiru mycteria* north of Venezuela as well as having breeding wood storks *Mycteria americana* and roseate spoonbills *Ajaia ajaja*. *Source: IUCN/BirdLife International Specialist Group on Storks, Ibises and Spoonbills Newsletter, 6 (1/2), 5.*

## SOUTH AMERICA

### Community protects Andean forest

The Colombian Government has established a 10,000-ha forest reserve at Virolin in the western slope of the eastern Andes. The area harbours some 2500 bird and 100 mammal species. The Guanentá Alta-Río Fonce Fauna and Flora Sanctuary is the first protected area in the country to be designated as a result of a community participatory process. *Source: World Birdwatch, 16 (1), 3.*

### Planting trees for a parrot

Plans have been made to plant 20,000–30,000 licuri palm trees

in Bahia, eastern Brazil. The nuts of the palm are the main food of Lear's macaw *Anodorhynchus leari*, of which about 65 remain in the wild. At present they have to fly considerable distances to their feeding grounds and in doing so are easy targets for hunters. Source: *Avicultural Magazine*, 100 (1), 54.

### Waterway threatens world's largest wetland

The proposed Hidrovia project, which would develop a complex navigation system through the basin of the Paraná and Paraguay rivers, serving large parts of Argentina, Paraguay, Bolivia, Uruguay and Brazil, would have many adverse environmental impacts, according to a report by Wetlands for the Americas. The world's largest wetland, the Pantanal of Brazil, Bolivia and Paraguay, would be degraded; it would lose its flood-regulatory effect, its biodiversity would be reduced and its water quality would deteriorate. Source: *Ramsar*, No. 17, 7.

### New bat

A new species of bat has been described from the Atlantic forest of south-eastern Brazil. *Lasiurus ebenus* differs from other members of the genus in having black instead of reddish fur. The single specimen was caught in premontane forest in the Ilha do Cardoso State Park. Source: *Mammalia*, 58 (1), 119–123.

### Bush dogs in Paraguay

A new population of bush dog *Speothos venaticus* has been located in the Mbaracayú Reserve, the largest single tract of undisturbed subtropical moist forest remaining in east-

ern Paraguay. The bushdog is Paraguay's most endangered mammal and this is the first time the species has been found in any of the country's protected areas. Source: *Canid News*, No. 2, 17.

### Merganser collapse in Argentina

A survey of the Brazilian merganser *Mergus octosetaceus* in Misiones Province, Argentina, found only one bird in an area believed to be its stronghold in that country. It is thought that the core of the region has been adversely affected by the Urugua-í dam, which was completed in 1989 and flooded around 80 km of the Urugua-í River. Other threats include an increase in river turbidity following deforestation, hunting and human disturbance. The species is known only from two other places – both national parks in Brazil – but populations there are also possibly under threat. Source: *World Birdwatch*, 15 (4), 4.

### New rodent – but does it survive?

A new rodent species has been described from Isla Mocha, a small coastal island in the Valdivian rain-forest zone of central Chile. The new Pacific degu *Octodon pacificus* has soft, long fur and is the largest species in its genus. It was described from specimens collected in 1959 by a Chilean ornithologist and it is not known whether the species still survives in the forest, thickets or swamps of the small island. Source: Hutterer, R. 1994. Island rodents: a new species of *Octodon* from Isla Mocha, Chile (Mammalia: Octodontidae), *Zeitschrift für Säugetierkunde*, 59, 27–41.

## AUSTRALASIA/ ANTARCTICA

### Replenishing trochus stocks

A joint Indonesia/Australian university project is under way to replenish depleted stocks of the trochus shell *Trochus niloticus*, which was once common on reefs north of Australia. There is increasing demand for the shell, which contains mother-of-pearl and is used as an ingredient of expensive car paints. Source: *Marine Pollution Bulletin*, 28 (2), 67.

### Greenpeace takes New Zealand to court over fisheries

Greenpeace has accused the New Zealand fisheries minister of setting a fish-catch quota too high and has filed an action in the High Court at Wellington. Greenpeace says that the minister acted illegally when setting orange roughly *Hoplostethus atlanticus* quotas off the east coast of South Island. For the last 3 years New Zealand's Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries scientists advised that the catch level needed to be reduced dramatically to protect stocks but the advice was ignored because of pressure from the fishing industry. Source: *Marine Pollution Bulletin*, March 1994, 133.

### Blue duck plans

There has been progress in conservation efforts for New Zealand's blue duck *Hymenolaimus malacorhynchus*. The first 5-year recovery plan has been completed successfully and as a result of blue duck presence, the Motu and Manganuiateao rivers in North



Island have been given total protection, and increased water flows have been returned to the headwaters of the Whanganui River. Blue ducks are now viewed as indicators of river system quality. The next version of the recovery plan will give greater emphasis to river conservation beyond headwaters and will promote population re-establishment. Providing a source of birds for re-population will be a challenge: translocated adults have returned over 150 km to their home territories, juveniles scatter before returning to their natal ranges and results of captive-breeding have been disappointing.

Source: *IWRB Threatened Waterfowl Research Group Newsletter*, No. 5, 3–4.

### Albatrosses safer

Seabirds in the Southern Ocean face a safer future following decisions at a recent meeting of the Convention on the Conservation of Antarctic Marine Living Resources (CCAMLR). A serious decline in the populations of a number of albatross species in colonies on South Georgia, the New Zealand subantarctic islands and Macquarie Island over the past 20–40 years has been attributed to deaths in long-line fisheries. The birds are attracted to the baits and many are caught on the hooks and drown. Now long-line vessels must carry streamers to frighten the birds away and frozen baits will be replaced with thawed ones, which sink faster. All vessels will carry a scientific observer from another CCAMLR country and the plastic strapping on boxes that carry the bait will be phased out by 1995–96.

Source: *Forest & Bird*, February 1994, 5.

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## OCEANIA

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### Endemic palm needs help on Vanuatu

*Carpoxyton macrospermum*, a palm endemic to Vanuatu and perhaps the nation's only endemic genus, was rediscovered in 1992 after having been feared extinct. Only 20 individuals were known but a new survey has found 51 plants on the island of Santo. Establishing a protected area would be difficult because of the land tenure system in Vanuatu, but income-generating schemes that would encourage people to grow the palm and protect its habitat are being evaluated. Seeds have also been distributed to botanical gardens in Fiji, Hawaii and Australia.

Source: *Naika*, No. 42, 3–7.

### First formally protected area for Vanuatu?

The Big Bay forest on the island of Santo may become Vanuatu's first formally protected area. It is the largest remaining area of intact continuous lowland coastal forest in the country and is threatened by logging. The local land-owning families are interested in protecting the forest, which provides valuable resources – but they also need money. For the time being they have rejected the logging proposal while conservationists develop alternative means of generating income from the forest.

Source: *Forest & Bird*, February 1994, 38–43.

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## PEOPLE

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Richard Leakey, who resigned as Director of the Kenya Wildlife Service on 14 January,

has been replaced by David Western who has directed The Wildlife Conservation Society's Kenya Programme for the past 20 years.

Source: *African Wildlife Update*, March–April 1994, 3.

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## PUBLICATIONS

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### Wilderness Guardian

The almost 700 pages of the second edition of *The Wilderness Guardian – A Practical Handbook* are crammed with useful information – building houses and bridges; digging wells and fire-breaks; maintaining roads, vehicles, boats and aeroplanes; medical and veterinary care; antipoaching measures; firearms; capturing and moving rhinos; maps and photography; ecosystems and natural history; and bushmanship. All this and more, clearly written and well illustrated, it is essential reference for wildlife rangers, game and park wardens and fascinating for almost anyone else. It is written by Tim Corfield and Published by Longman Kenya and the David Sheldrick Wildlife Trust with support from the African Wildlife Foundation. It is available from Longman Kenya, PO Box 18033, Nairobi, Kenya.

### Journal for chelonian conservation

*Chelonian Conservation and Biology* is the new scientific journal of the IUCN/SSC Tortoise and Freshwater Turtle Specialist Group and International Bulletin of Chelonian Research.

Subscriptions per volume (four issues published over 2 years) are \$25 for individuals and \$US50 for institutions with a \$US20 surcharge for airmail to



The cobra lily or California pitcher-plant *Darlingtonia californica* is the only member of its genus. Its cobra-like pitchers have made it desirable as a collector's plant since 1869, when it was first introduced into cultivation. It is known from 200 sites in California and 50 in Oregon, USA, but populations are declining. Drawing from *Pitchers in Trade* by R. B. Simpson, 1994, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 3AB, UK.

addresses outside the USA. *Contact:* Anders G. J. Rhodin, Chelonian Research Foundation, 168 Goodrich Street, Lunenburg MA 01462, USA.

### New Seychelles journal

The Nature Protection Trust of the Seychelles has published the first issue of a new annual scientific journal *Phelsuma*. The first issue carries original research papers on the status of the flora and fauna of Silhouette, reports on the Trust's projects and summaries

of recent publications concerning Seychelles. Future coverage will extend to the entire western Indian Ocean region.

*Contact:* Nature Protection Trust of Seychelles, PO Box 207, Victoria, Seychelles.

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## NEW ORGANIZATIONS

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### Licaone Fund

The Licaone Fund was created in 1992 by a group of Italian biologists concerned about the drastic situation of the African wild dog *Lycaon pictus*. It is a non-profit organization, which aims to raise money from private and corporate donors interested in protecting the wild dog and its habitat. Funds are used to support scientific projects that aim to preserve wild dogs in their natural habitat.

*Contact:* Licaone Fund, Via Mazoni 64, 19121 La Spezia, Italy. Tel: 0187 25524; Fax: 0187 24487.

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## OPPORTUNITIES

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### Course in plant conservation techniques

A 5- or 8-week (12 September–14 October or 4 November) comprehensive course in plant conservation techniques at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, UK, is the first of its kind in the world. It will review the options open to the plant conservationist by assessing the techniques available – from protected area management through to botanic gardens, seed banks and cryopreservation – and will provide students with the skills necessary to plan and implement actions.

*Details:* Education and

Marketing Department, Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, Richmond, Surrey TW9 3AB, UK. Tel: 081 332 5623/5626; Fax: 081 332 5610.

### PhD students sought

The University of Connecticut seeks outstanding PhD candidates in ecology, evolutionary biology, animal behaviour, systematics and conservation biology to participate in a new biodiversity programme. NSF Graduate Research Training fellowships and cost-of-education allowance available.

*Contact:* Biodiversity Graduate Fellowships, Department of Ecology and Evolutionary Biology U-43, University of Connecticut, Storrs, CT 06269–3043, USA.

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## MEETINGS

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### The Future for the Genus *Swietenia* in its Native Forest.

8 September 1994, London, UK. *Contact:* The Meetings Officer, The Linnean Society of London, Burlington House, Piccadilly, London W1V 0LQ. Tel: 071 434 4479; Fax: 071 287 9364.

### Wetlands 94 – 2nd

**International Symposium.** 27–30 September 1994, Cienaga de Zapata, Cuba. *Contact:* Palacio de las Convenciones, Apartado Postal 16046, La Habana, Cuba.

**Anatidae 2000 – An International Conference on the Conservation, Habitat Management and Wise Use of Ducks, Geese, Swans.** 5–9 December 1994, Strasbourg, France. *Contact:* Simon Nash, IWRB, Slimbridge, Gloucester GL2 7BX. Tel: 0453 890 624; Fax: 0453 890 697.