

## The Oryx 100% Fund

### Grants awarded

At its meeting on 11 September 1991 the FFPS Conservation Committee agreed funding for the following projects.

**£5000** to a team of six Venezuelans from BIOMA (the Venezuelan Foundation for the Conservation of Biological Diversity) for a conservation programme in the Paraguaná peninsula in north-western Venezuela. The programme started in 1987 and so far three reserves have been established and local environmental education programmes have been launched. With the threat of deforestation increasing it is vital to protect the last remnants of tropical dry forest. Field surveys to locate species or populations considered to be rare and/or threatened will be backed up by aerial photography and satellite images in order to map accurately remaining areas of natural vegetation for designation as reserves. The major species of interest are ocelot *Felis pardalis*, jaguarundi *F. yagouaroundi*, brown brocket *Mazama gouazoubira*, greater flamingo *Phoenicopterus ruber*, yellow-shouldered parrot *Amazona barbadosensis* and white-tailed deer *Odocoileus virginianus* (Project no. 91/25/7).

**\$US5000** to Radoslaw Ratajszczak and Nguen Xuang Dang for a status survey of the Tonkin snub-nosed langur *Pygathrix avunculus* in northern Vietnam. Study of this endangered primate, which has never been observed by scientists in the wild, has the highest priority in the IUCN/SSC Action Plan for Asian Primate Conservation. The primary goal is to locate remnant populations. Once this is done efforts will be made to assess the threats and to formulate guidelines for the species's conservation. In addition, observations will be collected on other primates of conservation interest and rare mustelids and viverrids. The study area, in Ha Tuyen province, has never been studied intensively by zoologists (Project no. 91/24/6).

**£2000** to a British/American/Tanzanian team of six to establish conservation priorities for isolated primate populations in remnant forest patches in southern Tanzania. The two

species concerned are nocturnal bush babies, or galagos, and have been almost totally overlooked. One, *Galagoides demidoff*, has received little attention since it was first identified in the Newala District in 1953, and the other, a pygmy form of *Otolemur crassicaudatus*, is new to science. The nearest populations of these mouse-sized galagos are 1800 km distant, in southern Zaire. The project aims to identify areas of special importance for the galagos, to co-ordinate with survey work on other groups of plants and animals, to establish practical conservation priorities, and to help with the training of local scientists and conservation officers (Project no. 91/19/5).

**£425** to a Sierra Leone/British team of four to survey colonies of white-necked bald crow *Picathartes gymnocephalus* in Sierra Leone. The species is endemic to the Upper Guinea forest block from Sierra Leone to Ghana but is threatened throughout its range by forest clearance, hunting and collecting for zoos. Surveys of primary forest, regenerated logged forest and recently logged forest will be carried out to determine the impact of logging. Breeding sites will be located and population size estimated. A conservation plan for the species will be developed and presented to the authorities responsible for forest management in Sierra Leone (Project no. 91/29/8).

**£303** to Madeleine Groves for a study of pitcher plant cropping in the south-eastern states of the USA for the domestic and international floristry industry. *Sarracenia* spp., which grow in the wetlands of southern Georgia, Florida, Alabama and Mississippi, are the focus of the study and concern has been expressed over the increasing numbers of pitchers cut from the wild (see *Oryx*, 24, 201–207). The project will assess the nature and extent of the harvest, collect information on the market destinations, liaise with landowners and make recommendations for the sustainable use of the resource (Project no. 91/31/9).

### Reports received

The following final reports of Oryx 100% Fund projects have been received recently: Comoro

Islands Expedition, by Ian Thorpe (Project no. 89/25/10); and The Current Situation of the Cloud Forest in Northern Chiapas, Mexico by Philip Bubb (Project no. 90/29/9).

### FFPS appointment in Turkey

Andrew Byfield joined the Society in December to take up the post as Development Officer for the Indigenous Propagation Project (IPP). After attending the inaugural meeting of the joint steering group for the project in Lisse, in the Netherlands, on 6 December, he will move to Turkey. When not engaged in fieldwork he will be working from the offices of Dogal Hayati Koruma Dernegi (the Turkish Society for the Protection of Nature).

Andrew has worked in the past for the Nature Conservancy Council in Hampshire

(now English Nature) and for the charity, Plantlife. His 12-month appointment with the FFPS will involve research and liaison to ensure that the IPP fulfils its threefold aims of reducing pressures on wild populations of bulbs, providing a safe and secure income for villagers currently involved in collecting from the wild, and producing good quality plants for export to the horticultural trade. The IPP is being overseen by the Society's Conservation Committee Vice-Chairman, Dr Barry Thomas and its Botanical Consultant, Mike Read.

### Wildlife Photographer of the Year 1991

Dutch photographer Frans Lanting won the British Gas Wildlife Photographer of the Year 1991 title with his portfolio of photographs taken in Okavango, Botswana. More than 1000



These impala drinking at a waterhole in the Okavango, Botswana were photographed by Frans Lanting and were among a portfolio of 10 pictures that won him the title Wildlife Photographer of the Year 1991. The British Gas Wildlife Photographer of the Year Competition is organized by BBC WILDLIFE Magazine and the Natural History Museum in association with the FFPS.

amateur and professional wildlife photographers entered the competition, between them submitting 10,000 entries from 40 countries. The award ceremony took place at The Natural History Museum, London, on 21 November, with Sir David Attenborough presenting the British Gas Award—a bronze statue of an ibis, a cheque for £600 and a holiday in Trinidad and Tobago.

The prize-winning and specially commended photographs, together with top entries in the Young Wildlife Photographer of the Year Competition, are on display at The Natural History Museum until 5 May 1992. The exhibition tours throughout the UK and abroad from February 1992. The competition is sponsored by British Gas and organized by BBC WILDLIFE magazine and The Natural History Museum in association with the FFPS.

Details of next year's competition are available from Helen Gilks, BBC WILDLIFE Magazine, Broadcasting House, Whiteladies Road, Bristol BS8 2LR. Fax: 0272 467075.

### International Gorilla Conservation Programme

The IGCP, which the FFPS, the African Wildlife Foundation and World Wide Fund for Nature—International run as equal partners, is now well established and is developing a regional programme for gorilla and forest conservation.

In Rwanda it is still impossible to operate in the third of the park adjacent to the Ugandan border and there are sporadic skirmishes in the region. None the less, the situation is improving elsewhere. The guards, now fully re-equipped (see *Oryx*, 25, 237) are controlling poaching. All the monitored gorilla groups have been relocated, with no casualties reported. Visitors are returning, especially to the Susa group, which is furthest from the Uganda border. The visitors are mainly expatriate residents and from overlander trucks, but income is picking up again, allowing the park to start regaining its running costs. Thanks are due to US-AID, which stepped in to cover guards' salaries so that the full staff

complement could be maintained.

Meanwhile, in Zaire the situation has become very difficult. All expatriates have been evacuated from the country, curtailing FFPS work in Salonga (an Oryx 100% Fund project—see *Oryx*, 25, 119) and putting plans for further work in the Kahuzi-Biega National Park and Itombwe region into abeyance as well as work through the IGCP. Zaire remains the key country for forest and gorilla conservation work, however, and the Society will resume its activity as soon as the situation calms down. In the meantime we will continue with Rwanda and develop our role through the IGCP with Uganda.

The FFPS work has benefited from a welcome and generous sponsorship deal with German Cargo Services (GmbH), which has opened a new service into Kigali, Rwanda and is providing shipment of goods to Kigali free of charge. The arrangement is designed to assist all the gorilla and forest conservation projects in the region.

### CITES

Mike Read will represent the Society at the CITES meeting in Kyoto, Japan, 2–13 March 1992. He will be paying particular attention to the plant issues, which include the proposed listing on Appendix II of a number of timber species, including New World mahoganies *Swietenia* spp., and of Brazilian rosewood *Dalbergia nigra* on Appendix I. Other plant proposals include *Tillandsia* spp., various cacti species and Venus's fly-trap *Dionaea muscipula*. The animal proposals involve bears, salamanders, frogs, rheas, hyena, leopard, African elephant, Geoffroy's cat, hornbills, pangolin, macaws and more. A report on the meeting will be published in the July issue of *Oryx*.

### Members' meetings

For information on meetings see the insert in this *Oryx*. For meetings in the regions please contact FFPS, 1 Kensington Gore, London SW7 2AR. Tel: 071 823 8899; Fax: 071 823 9690.