

ANNUAL REPORT FOR THE YEAR ENDING
31st DECEMBER, 1954

*To be presented by the Council to the Annual General Meeting,
4th April, 1955.*

The President.—His Majesty The King of the Belgians has honoured our Society by appointing our President, Lord Willingdon, to be a member of the Commission of the National Parks of the Belgian Congo.

Vice-Presidents.—On 28th April, Captain Keith Caldwell was appointed a vice-president of the Society in recognition of his many years' work for wild life conservation, especially in Africa.

On 7th October, the Society suffered the great loss of Sir William Gowers, who had been a member of Council for twenty-two years and a vice-president for nine.

Fauna Conservation.—Mention is made below of some of the many problems upon which the Society has been engaged during the past year.

Great Britain.—The report of the Government Committee on red deer in Scotland has been carefully considered. The Society unreservedly supports the majority report and urges its acceptance. Further action is being taken in 1955.

The Society's British Animals Committee, in consultation with the British Herpetological Society, has been considering the need for preservation of the common frog, the natterjack toad, the smooth snake and the sand lizard.

Cyprus.—The Society was glad to hear from the Hellenic Society for the Protection of Nature that temporary wardens had been appointed to protect the wild goat of Crete. It is hoped that these appointments may soon be made permanent.

Members will remember Mr. Hugh Farmer's mission to Crete in 1952, which had as its object the preservation of this wild goat.

Ceylon.—The Society was able to be of some help to Mr. A. C. Tutein Nolthenius in his efforts towards the formation of a National Trust for Ceylon.

Rhodesia.—There have been reports in the Press about wholesale destruction of elephants in Southern Rhodesia, in connection both with the proposed Kariba Gorge irrigation scheme and in order to counter the spread of tsetse fly from Portuguese East Africa. Although reports have been exaggerated, there is no question that from a conservation point of view the situation is very serious.

The Government of Southern Rhodesia continues to pin its faith on game destruction as a means of eradication of the tsetse

fly. The Society admits that with one species of fly under certain conditions, some restricted game slaughter may be the only method economically practicable. It believes that there is no justification for the present almost unrestricted slaughter by African hunters who receive negligible pay, but reward themselves from the proceeds of their killing. The Society, supported by the Report of the Shinyanga Game Destruction Experiment, considers that game destruction is indecisive except in isolated fly belts of manageable size. It favours and urges the method of discriminative bush clearing, which as far as the Society knows has never been tried in Southern Rhodesia.

Work on this problem continues in co-operation with the Wild Life Protection Society of Rhodesia and the Southern Rhodesia National Hunters and Game Preservation Association.

The advice of the Society was asked and of course given upon the advisability of buying the Lochinvar estate in Northern Rhodesia, as a reserve for the red lechwe. An article on this subject appears in the current number of *Oryx*.

Nyasaland.—In Nyasaland the Society once again paid the wages of an African game guard in the Mjeti non-shooting area. Action was also taken to aid the Nyasaland Fauna Preservation Society in its efforts to keep intact the Lengwe game reserve, a sanctuary for the nyala.

Gold Coast.—Since the retirement of Mr. A. J. Cox, the Gold Coast has been without a game warden. The Society has urged that a successor be appointed and has been informed that provision for his salary has been made. By the end of 1954, however, no warden had actually been appointed.

Australia.—The Society has been interested in the preservation of Australian animals, especially kangaroos in New South Wales and the banded anteater and other small marsupials in Western Australia. There is now a strong conscience in Australia favourable to the preservation of its unique fauna and there are signs that a halt has been called to extermination.

Arctic Animals.—The Society has pressed for the conservation of Arctic animals, especially the polar bear and the walrus. It successfully protested against the proposed killing of walrus by a hunting expedition in Norwegian waters. It instigated the discussion on the preservation of arctic fauna at the Copenhagen conference of the International Union for the Protection of Nature. This discussion was followed by the setting up of the Arctic fauna committee under Professor Spjörck of Denmark.

Accounts.—Members will see that during the year there was an excess of income over expenditure of £110 12s. 8d. The

income included £200, part of the legacy of £400 from the late Duke of Bedford, and also donations amounting to £307 6s. 7d. Without these the Society's expenditure would have exceeded its income by £396 13s. 11d.

Meetings.—There were five ordinary general meetings, the Annual General Meeting and five ordinary meetings of Council. A special meeting of Council was held on 28th October. It approved a proposal to hold a meeting at the Royal Festival Hall on the 19th February, 1955, in conjunction with the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds.

British Animals Committee.—A standing committee was formed, under the chairmanship of Mr. Maxwell Knight, to consider the preservation of British animals. The British Herpetological Society and the Mammal Society of the British Isles have each nominated a representative.

The Journal.—The usual three issues of *Oryx* were published.

International Conferences.—The Society was represented by the Secretary at the General Assembly of the International Union for the Protection of Nature held in Copenhagen. The Secretary also represented the Society and the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves, at a conference held in Beirut on nature conservation in the Near East.

Lectures and Films.—Lectures with films were given by members of the Society at the Overseas League and at schools and other institutions.

At the end of 1954 the film library consisted of thirteen wild life films, all of which were frequently shown in Great Britain. The film "Animals of Ceylon" went for exhibition to India and Northern Rhodesia. "Expedition Moose" went to Northern Rhodesia.

Kindred Societies.—Throughout the year the Society kept in touch with kindred societies in many parts of the world. The Society is represented by the Secretary on the British Section of the International Committee for Bird Preservation, the British Committee for International Nature Conservation, the Oil Pollution Committee, and the Survival Committee of the International Union for the Protection of Nature.

Oil Pollution Campaign.—A donation of £10 10s. was made to the Oil Pollution Campaign

Covenants and Banker's Orders.—At the end of 1954 two hundred and eleven members were paying their subscriptions under seven-year deeds of covenant. The Council earnestly hopes that still more members will be so good as to give these covenants; they greatly benefit the Society at no extra cost to the member.

Many members find banker's orders useful and they save the Society clerical work, stationery, and postage. Forms for deeds of covenant and banker's order will be sent by the Secretary on application.

Acknowledgements.—The Council desires to express its thanks to those who spoke and showed films at general meetings: to those who lectured on behalf of the Society, especially to Mr. C. E. E. Scott who not only spoke himself, but most generously used his car to carry lecturers: to the Natal Parks Board for the film "Heritage of Natal and Zululand" and to the Government of Uganda for "Wild Life in Uganda": to contributors to *Oryx*, not forgetting Mr. Ian Menzies, for his valuable work on maps: and to many other helpers. Special thanks are due to the Zoological Society of London for the provision of office accommodation and for the unstinted help given by the Society's staff throughout the year.

THE AUDITORS' REPORT

*To the Council and Members of the
Fauna Preservation Society.*

11th February, 1955.

ACCOUNTS FOR THE YEAR ENDED 31ST DECEMBER, 1954

We have completed the audit of the Books and Accounts of the Society for the year ended 31st December, 1954, and report thereon as follows.

GENERAL PURPOSES ACCOUNT

The Balance on this Account at the end of the year was £6,218 5s. 1d. after transferring £110 12s. 8d. being excess of Income over Expenditure on the year's working and £1,844 8s. 7d. from the Life Membership Fund to which reference is made below.

We feel that we should point out that the surplus for the year arises after taking into account the receipt during the year of Donations and Legacies amounting to £507 6s. 7d. without which the year's working would have resulted in a deficit of £396 13s. 11d.

The figure of £110 12s. 8d. referred to above compares with £1,625 15s. 6d. in respect of the previous year and is after transferring £100 to the Secretary's Travelling Expenses Account in accordance with the minutes of the Society. The reduction in the amount of surplus transferred is almost entirely accounted for by the reduction in the total amount received by way of Donations and Legacies.