

The Oryx 100% Fund

Reports received

Frugivores in Salonga National Park, Zaire (Project no. 90/22/10). From January until September 1991 a team from Rennes University in France studied feeding ecology of a monkey community in the swamp forests of Salonga National Park in central Zaire. This park, which covers 36,000 sq km is the largest protected rain forest in the world. Seven species of monkey occur in the study area, four of which are endemic to the Zaire basin: Dent's monkey *Cercopithecus denti*, Allen's swamp monkey *Allenopithecus nigroviridis*, *Procolobus rufomitratu tholloni*, and black mangabey *Cercocebus aterrimus*.

The aims of the project are to investigate the seasonal feeding patterns of the vertebrate frugivore community, of which monkeys are the major fraction in biomass, and to find which trees may be limiting factors for them during seasons of food scarcity. These trees are known as keystone resources and have been shown to differ with habitat type. All the other animal-dispersed tree and liane species (which can be as high as 75 per cent of the species in tropical forests) thus could depend on the presence of keystone resources to maintain their dispersers.

Results so far indicate that this part of the great African tropical forest belt differs from areas studied further west, in Gabon, where, although closely related monkey species occur, their diets are very different from those in Salonga. In Gabon monkeys rely on fleshy fruit throughout the year and the keystone species there are rare or absent in the Zaire study site, which is dominated by leguminous trees. Thus the monkeys in Zaire have few fleshy fruit available to them but must instead survive on leaves, arils (fatty material surrounding certain seeds) and legume seeds. Identification of keystone resources is most important as logging operations in similar habitats outside protected areas will cause less long-term damage if keystone species are avoided. This information will be disseminated to organizations involved both in the pro-

tection of tropical African forests and to potential exploiters.

This project has been interrupted by the political situation in Zaire but Fiona Maisels, the team member who was the recipient of the Oryx 100% Fund grant and who provided the information for this report, says that the project will resume as soon as the situation in Zaire becomes stable.

Operation Partula

The Society has supported efforts to save *Partula* snails from extinction through past Oryx 100% Fund grants. Using earmarked money left in the fund after the last expedition, we were able to assist with another in August–September 1991. This was in four phases: an ecological study of the island of Moorea in the Pacific, the site of extinction of seven species of *Partula* snails by 1987; a study of undisturbed *Partula* species on the island of Huahine; a survey of the islands of Raiatea and Bora Bora for populations of indigenous and introduced snails; and a laboratory study of newly collected *Partula* species from Huahine and Raiatea at the Oponohu research station on Moorea. A report will follow.

FFPS funds shark conservation slide set

The FFPS has donated £429 earmarked for sharks from its Oryx 100% Fund to the IUCN/SSC Shark Specialist Group. The money will be used to prepare a 40-slide speaker's kit for members of the Specialist Group to use in promoting shark conservation. The slide pack will also be sold through the international marine network, with any profits being used by the Specialist group to further conservation efforts.

Members' meetings

For information on meetings see the insert in this *Oryx*. For meetings in the regions please contact the FFPS Secretariat.