essential for conservation to have the proper scientific basis' and that of Dr Bourne that 'it is still sometimes important for purposes of both conservation and the advancement of knowledge that examples of potential new forms should be placed on record as soon as possible', as well as Dr Hutterer's claim that 'to obtain the primary information, collection of specimens is often required'.

The point I was, apparently unsuccessfully, endeavouring to make, was that the advent of deoxyribonucleic acid (DNA) genetic 'fingerprinting', coupled with modern photographic, videotaping and sound-recording techniques, makes it perfectly possible to demonstrate the existence of new forms without the necessity of resorting to the collection of living specimens of possibly threatened species. The notion that to prove and establish the existence and identity of a species new to science it is necessary to collect a holotype is, I submit, outdated.

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Cat amongst the freiras

Since early 1987 the Madeira-based team of the Freira Conservation Project has carried out aggressive poisoning of the black rat *Rattus rattus* in the breeding area of the endemic Madeira freira *Pterodroma madeira*, using Klerat provided by ICI. The scheme has met with success and while no juveniles were recorded at the start of the project, the number of successfully fledged juveniles has increased over the years.

At the onset of the 1991 breeding season things augured well; the birds returned to their breeding grounds and were observed cleaning out their burrows. The first warning of trouble came in late June, when what appeared to be a dead bird was observed through binoculars on a breeding ledge. This exceptionally dangerous site was eventually visited on 1 July 1991. To our horror the remains of eight freiras were found and on a subsequent visit, two more, making a total of 10 dead freiras. If we consider these as breeding birds, from an estimated breeding population of 20–30 pairs, then the magnitude of the problem can be seen.

Almost certainly the culprit of this slaughter is a cat. Feral cats have been observed in the area and scats recovered, which contained white feathers. How to rid the area of cats in such wild terrain with unlimited cover is a major problem that must be overcome at all costs. I would welcome any advice on how to tackle this problem.

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Lake Nakuru Black Rhinoceros Sanctuary

I would like to comment on the article, Lake Nakuru Black Rhinoceros Sanctuary (*Oryx*, **24**, 90–94).

This sanctuary was always intended as a sanctuary for both black and white rhinos, and although the article was about the black rhino, and probably at the time the article was written only black rhino were present in the sanctuary, this point should have been mentioned. Some years earlier the UK press had stated that the remaining government-owned white rhino had been killed at Meru Park after the Warden, Mr Peter Jenkins, had left there, and stated that these had been the last in Kenya. In fact, at that time, I was Warden at Solio Game Reserve and we had very healthy populations of both black and white rhinos. It was, indeed, due to excess numbers of both species that the Rhino Rescue started. Solio was the only place in Kenya free from poaching and over the previous 14 years the populations of both species had steadily increased to the point that Peter Jenkins and I decided to take action to relieve the pressure and set up rhino sanctuaries elsewhere. Peter was, at that time stationed at Mweiga Park Headquarters of the Aberdare Park, not far from Solio. Once the government Wildlife Conservation and Management Service started trapping, word got out about the large numbers of rhino in Solio and poaching began.