

International

TRAFFIC and WWF focus on deep-sea fisheries resources

TRAFFIC Oceania and WWF's Endangered Seas Programme have prepared a joint report focusing on problems relating to deep-sea fisheries. The experience of the orange roughy *Hoplostethus atlanticus* fisheries is used to highlight concerns. Orange roughy live for about 120 years at depths of 500–2,000 m and aggregate to spawn on deep-sea seamounts. Fishing for orange roughy causes significant damage to fragile seamount communities and commercial extinction of some fish stocks. The report makes recommendations that can be applied to the future development of deep-sea fisheries.

Source: *TRAFFIC Dispatches* (2003), 21, 3.

Tighter controls needed to curb threat to snow leopards

A recent report by TRAFFIC, WWF and the International Snow Leopard Trust shows that snow leopards *Uncia uncia* and their parts are traded in all 12 range states, with the possible exception of Bhutan. There are now thought to be only 4,000–7,000 snow leopards left in the wild. Killing for trade is the biggest threat in Central Asia and the Russian Federation, while in the Himalayas the main threat comes from conflicts between snow leopards and herders. Pelts are in high demand, although there is also an illicit trade in live animals and body parts for use in traditional Asian medicines. Concerted efforts to improve snow leopard conservation were strengthened by the completion of the global Snow Leopard Survival Strategy in August 2003.

Source: *TRAFFIC Dispatches* (2003), 21, 6.

Bluefin tuna heading for extinction

The bluefin tuna *Thunnus thynnus* is one of the key species caught by longliners, and massive overfishing is driving the species to extinction. Japan is the main market for bluefin tuna, which are highly prized as a delicacy. Tuna are caught in huge nets and there is a significant bycatch of other animals including

sharks, undersized swordfish, cetaceans and turtles. Despite the efforts of regulatory bodies such as the International Commission for the Conservation of Atlantic Tunas, the stocks of bluefin tuna have continued to decline. In 1961 the catch of southern bluefin tuna was 81,605 tonnes. This had fallen to 40,000 tonnes by 1980 and in 1986 an annual quota of 38,650 tonnes was introduced. Japan broke this quota in 1998 and was taken to court by Australia and New Zealand under the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea. A temporary injunction to halt overfishing was obtained.

Source: *World Birdwatch* (2003), 25(4), 9.

Conservation status of six albatrosses worsens

New research has shown that only two species of albatrosses, light-mantled sooty albatross *Phoebastria palpebrata* and shy albatross *Thalassarche cauta*, are considered Near Threatened, the remaining 19 species are all considered at risk of extinction because of mortality caused by longlining operations. Six albatross species (Atlantic yellow-nosed albatross *T. chlororhynchus*, black-browed albatross *T. melanophrys*, black-footed albatross *Phoebastria nigripes*, yellow-nosed albatross *T. carteri*, sooty albatross *Phoebastria fusca* and Laysan albatross *Phoebastria immutabilis*) have had their conservation status upgraded.

Source: *World Birdwatch* (2003), 25(4), 9.

World's waders are in decline

A conference of the International Wader Study Group held in Cadiz, Spain, in September 2003 drew attention to the disturbing decline in wader populations worldwide. At the meeting, 132 specialists from 20 countries reviewed the population and conservation status of waders around the world. Of wader populations with known trends, 48% are declining, while only 16% are increasing. The reasons for these declines are diverse and poorly understood. It was agreed that there was an urgent need for significantly greater investment by governments to establish monitoring schemes and better understand the causes of population declines. Once this is achieved, targeted conservation responses can be made.

Source: *Species* (2003), 40, 5.

Census reveals ignorance about marine biodiversity

The 10-year Census of Marine Life (CoML) was launched in 2000 with the aim of identifying the marine equivalents of biodiversity hotspots such as the Amazon rainforest. In October 2003 CoML produced its first preliminary report which showed just how little we know about marine life. The census has been discovering new fish species at the rate of about three per week and researchers expect to add 2,000–3,000 species to their database by 2010. Researchers expect to catalogue about 2 million marine species in total. One surprise has been the extraordinary biodiversity in the sediments that cover the vast plains of the ocean floor. One survey off Angola found an area more diverse than any other aquatic environment; 80% of the species sampled were new to science. IUCN hopes to designate five new marine protected areas on the high seas by 2008.

Source: *New Scientist* (2003), 180(2419), 14.

Plans to tackle global decline in great ape populations

In November 2003 a meeting was held in Paris under the auspices of the United Nations' Great Apes Survival Project to thrash out a conservation strategy for the great apes. Numbers of great apes, gorillas, orang-utans and chimpanzees have been declining worldwide and by 2030 it is estimated that just 10% of virgin habitat for great apes in Africa will still exist and only 1% of habitat for orang-utans will still remain. There is a proposal to create an International Great Ape Commission, recognized by established zoological bodies, to bring together the countries affected, donors, scientists and NGOs to generate publicity and develop common plans and more rigorous systems for evaluating best practice in conservation approaches.

Source: *Nature* (2003), 426(6965), 369.

Corruption is undermining conservation but biodiversity is highest in unstable countries

A recent study has confirmed what many already believe, that countries with the most corrupt governments have the worst conservation records. However, the study also shows that these countries

also have the most species. Donors are reluctant to work in corrupt countries and corruption inhibits effectiveness. Corruption also has implications for controlling the trade in animals products, whereby prohibiting legal sales may simply drive up prices, allowing elites to have better access to these resources. Wildlife workers are often poorly remunerated, making bribes more attractive. It is stressed that conservationists are working in a market and that the only people offering communities anything for their resources are the people who are destroying them.

Source: *Nature* (2003), 426, 67–70.

New IUCN Red List paints stark picture

In November 2003, the 2003 *IUCN Red List of Threatened Species* was launched. This paints a gloomy picture of the current state of global biodiversity. In total 12,259 species of animals and plants are threatened with extinction; this is an increase of over 2,000 on the 2002 list. The Red List is based on information from a network of 7,000 experts as well as data from a number of partner organizations. It is acknowledged to be the authoritative inventory of the conservation status of animals and plants. However, the Red List does not tell the whole story as many species of animals and plants have yet to be assessed. Scientists have estimated that the current species extinction rates are between 1,000 and 10,000 times higher than they would naturally be. Many more plant species are now classified as threatened, including 1,164 from Ecuador and 125 from Hawaii. A total of 6,774 plants are listed as threatened; this is c. 2% of the total known species. However, only 4% of the world's plant species have so far been evaluated.

Source: http://www.iucn.org/info_and_news/press/redlistiucn2003.pdf

Botanists highlight the importance of seed banks for conserving threatened plants

Three botanists involved in the development of the Millennium Seed Bank Project at Wakehurst Place in southern England have argued that seed banks may provide part of the solution for conserving the world's plants. However, there is little knowledge of how seeds will cope with conservation. For example, the behaviour of seeds in storage is known for only 4% of angiosperms. The United Nations Convention on Biological Diversity has launched a strategy for plant conservation and it is

argued that implementing the strategy's target (60% of threatened plant species should be held in accessible collections, preferably in the country of origin, and 10% of them included in recovery and restoration projects) would cost c. \$100 million. A further \$5 million would be needed to maintain the seed banks.

Source: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/sci/tech/3168590.stm>

Harvesting caviar from live sturgeon brings hope for threatened populations

Caviar is the unfertilized eggs, or roe, of the female sturgeon. The fish is normally killed to obtain the roe, which is then salted, canned and sold as caviar. A new initiative to promote the harvest of caviar from live sturgeon may help reduce the pressure on wild sturgeon populations. A leading US importer in the caviar industry, Marky's Caviar, International Food Emporium (Optimus Inc.) has reached an agreement with Raskat, a Russian caviar producer, to purchase beluga, osietra and sevruga caviar produced without killing female sturgeons. The roe will be removed surgically, the fish stitched up, tagged and then returned to the sea. Marky's Caviar will also insist on DNA batch tests to ensure that the source of the caviar can be verified. TRAFFIC has shown that previous attempts at this kind of technique have had poor results because of slow regrowth of the female sturgeon's ovaries but they nevertheless feel that these kinds of commercial initiatives should be supported.

Source: *TRAFFIC Bulletin* (2003), 19(3), 112.

Europe

European Commission continues to ignore scientists' plea for halt to cod fishing

For the second year running the European Commission has ignored pleas from scientists that cod fishing in the North Sea be banned to allow stocks to recover. Continued fishing could drive local cod populations to extinction, and rising sea temperatures due to global warming may exacerbate the situation by eliminating the fish's preferred food, cold water copepod plankton. European Union fisheries ministers cut 2003 cod

quotas by 65% despite a plea from the International Council for the Exploration of the Seas for a complete ban. In December 2003 the EU recommended the same catch for 2004 as for 2003. Rising sea temperatures have meant that the cold water copepod plankton that used to bloom at just the right time to feed baby cod have been replaced by warm water copepod plankton that blooms later when baby cod need larger food items.

Source: *New Scientist* (2003), 180(2425), 8.

European Commission plans total ban on drift nets in the Baltic Sea

Drift nets are used in the Baltic Sea mainly to catch salmon, and they have caused major conservation concerns because cetaceans are accidentally caught and killed in the nets. There is a particular concern over the Critically Endangered harbour porpoise *Phocoena phocoena*. In response to this concern, the European Commission has put forward proposals for a total ban on the use of drift nets in the Baltic Sea by 2007. In the meantime, the Commission is calling for a reduction in the length of drift nets to 2.5 km.

Source: *TRAFFIC Bulletin* (2003), 19(3), 121.

Japan rejects Iceland's whale meat

Japan has dealt a severe blow to Iceland's plans to expand its whaling operations by rejecting the import of whale products from Iceland. It has also been reported that Icelandic consumers have shown little enthusiasm for whale meat that was landed following the hunting of 36 minke whales. Iceland had submitted a scientific proposal to the International Whaling Commission to hunt 500 whales over two years, made up of 200 fin whales, 100 sei whales and 200 minke. Following international condemnation, Iceland scaled back its plans to hunt 250 whales in 2003, instead taking only 36 out of a planned 38 minke. Iceland is one of the best whale-watching areas in the world and there has been strong criticism of the government's whaling plans from the tourism industry. Consumption of whale meat and blubber in Japan is falling because of changing consumer preferences and concerns over contaminants such as mercury. As a result, Japan is finding it difficult to sell meat from its own hunts.

Source: <http://www.wdcs.org/dan/publishing.nsf/webnews/AF6D0CA0B06AEF4080256DC60052A398>

Reindeer population under severe threat

Europe's last remaining population of wild reindeer *Rangifer tarandus* is in peril. The species is threatened by the building of dams, mountain cabins and hydroelectric schemes across their natural habitat in southern Norway. There has been evidence of steep declines in Norwegian reindeer as the animals flee construction projects and crowd into ever smaller areas with ever smaller supplies of the lichen on which they feed. Fifty percent of the reindeer's habitat has been lost in the last 50 years. The 30,000 remaining animals, down from 60,000 in the 1960s, are fragmented into 24 isolated groups and it is predicted that there may be just 15,000 animals by 2020.

Source: *New Scientist* (2003), 180 (2426/7/8), 7.

New UK legislation causes unexpected problem

The new Countryside and Rights of Way Act (2000) has been hailed as a very progressive piece of conservation legislation. The Act calls for a definitive map of England's rights of way to be completed by 2026. However, the so-called Discovering Lost Ways project has caused concern because many of these lost ways are legally open to motorized transport and could therefore be used by off-roading groups. The use of off-road vehicles has caused serious damage to some important wildlife sites. Some rights of way go back hundreds of years, from when a landowner granted a right of way through a newly enclosed field to a horse and cart. Legally, this right now extends to any form of transport. There is particular concern over possible rights of way across virgin moorland in northern England. There are thought to be 16,000 km of unrecorded rights of way, of which 2,700 km could be open to use by jeeps, cars and motorbikes.

Source: *BBC Wildlife* (2003), 21(11), 18.

Royal Navy installs sonar despite US ruling

The Royal Navy is to deploy a high-powered sonar system despite a ruling by a US federal judge that a similar system can kill whales, turtles and even fish. Low-frequency active sonar (LFAS) is used to detect submarines and is effective over large distances. In 1994, research on LFAS showed that fish suffered serious internal injuries when it was used. In the US, Judge Elizabeth Laporte ordered the US Navy to negotiate with objectors and agree where LFAS training could cause least damage.

It is not clear if the Royal Navy plans to mitigate the impact of LFAS.

ic:Source: *BBC Wildlife* (2003), 21(11), 21.

Badger culling appears to increase incidence of bovine tuberculosis

Bovine tuberculosis (TB) is a disease of cattle that can also be transmitted to humans. The incidence of TB in cattle has increased in the past 20 years and badgers *Meles meles* have been implicated in the transmission of TB to cattle. The culling of badgers has formed a major component of British TB control since 1973. Between 1975 and 1997 over 20,000 badgers were culled as part of the government's strategy to control bovine TB, an activity that created conflict between conservation and farming interest groups. However, the results of a large-scale field trial of badger culling show that this method not only fails to control TB but also seems to increase the incidence of TB in cattle.

Source: *Nature* (2003), 426(6968), 834–837.

Worrying assessment of the status of England's protected areas

In the UK, English Nature, the government's nature conservation agency, has produced a worrying assessment of the current status of Sites of Special Scientific Interest (SSSIs) in England. More than 7% of England's total area, over 1 million ha, is included in SSSIs. The smallest SSSI is the 7 m² Sylvan House Barn in Gloucestershire, home to the threatened lesser horseshoe bat *Rhinolophus hipposideros*, while the largest is The Wash, 62,212 ha of saltmarsh, mudflats and channels. The English Nature survey showed that 44.6% of SSSIs were categorized as in 'favourable condition', 41.5% as 'unfavourable declining' or 'unfavourable no change', 13.7% as 'unfavourable recovering' and 0.2% as 'partially destroyed' or 'destroyed'. Upland habitats were generally in a poorer state than lowland habitats and the main threats were overgrazing, inappropriate moor burning, freshwater drainage, undergrazing and neglect, coastal erosion, coastal flood defence, diffuse pollution and fisheries harvesting.

Source: *English Nature Magazine* (2003), 70, 6–7.

Major supermarket chain supports sustainable fisheries

One of Britain's biggest supermarket chains, Sainsbury's, has announced that it will buy all wild fish from sustainable sources by 2010. Its own-label fresh, frozen and canned wild-captured fish

will be sourced from well-managed fisheries which meet the needs of the FAO Code of Conduct for responsible fisheries. To achieve its aim, Sainsbury's will be working closely with the Marine Stewardship Council.

Source: *TRAFFIC Bulletin* (2003), 19(3), 121.

Darwin Mounds are to be protected

The Darwin Mounds, a unique collection of cold water coral mounds 185 km northwest of Scotland, are to benefit from a European Commission (EC) decision to introduce emergency fishing restrictions for a period of 6 months. A survey in 2000 showed evidence of smashed and fragmented corals where linear channels had been cut into the reefs by fishing trawlers. The EC decision follows a promise, made by the UK Government in October 2001, to protect these fragile reefs from damage by deep sea fishing activities.

Source: *Marine Pollution Bulletin* (2003), 46(10), 1215.

British trials to reduce dolphin deaths

A group of Scottish fishermen have agreed to continue to use separator grids that aim to reduce the numbers of dolphins that get trapped in fishing nets. In trials, vessels used separator grids which let targeted fish swim further down the net whilst deflecting larger animals such as dolphins. The nets allow dolphins either to turn around and exit the net or swim through an escape flap positioned in the net above the grid. The UK Government is considering making the use of these grids mandatory for all UK vessels involved in the bass fishery. The reduction in dolphin mortality during the grid trials was dramatic. Two dolphins died in 82 hauls over a 7-week period in March 2003. In observations elsewhere in the fishery without the grid deployed, 28 dolphins were killed in 49 hauls.

Source: *Marine Pollution Bulletin* (2003), 46(11), 1362.

Campaign launched to save native crayfish in the UK

The UK Environment Agency has launched a campaign to prevent the extinction of the native or white-clawed crayfish *Austropotamobius pallipes*, which is threatened by the spread of the non-native American signal crayfish

Pacifastacus leniusculus. The American species was imported 30 years ago to be farmed for its meat. However this non-native species carries a fungal disease, crayfish plague, that spells disaster for the native species. The Environment Agency has produced some simple rules to prevent the further spread of crayfish plague. The public are being asked never to release anything from garden ponds or aquaria into a stream or river. It is also illegal to introduce any non-native crayfish into the wild. Plague spores are highly infectious and can be carried on boots or fishing tackle. Walkers and anglers are being asked to thoroughly dry and disinfect equipment between trips.

Source: *Marine Pollution Bulletin* (2003), 46(12), 1520.

Proposed wind farm threatens seabirds

A complaint has been lodged by NABU (BirdLife in Germany) with the European Commission over plans to develop an offshore wind farm in the North Sea west of Sylt. The wind farm, containing 80 turbines, would be at the centre of the Eastern German Bight Important Bird Area and would threaten key seabird populations such as red-throated and black-throated divers *Gavia stellata* and *G. arctica*, sandwich terns *Sterna sandvicensis* and ducks. Many companies want to construct large offshore wind farms in the Exclusive Economic Zone and hundreds of square kilometres of sand and gravel extraction is planned.

Source: *BirdLife in Europe* (2003), 8(2), 4.

France shows increasing passion for exotic pets

Like other European Union countries, France is showing an increasing interest in new and unusual pet species. A two-day Animal Expo in Paris in September 2002 was visited by over 45,000 people and provided an opportunity to buy chameleons, snakes, scorpions, rodents and parrots. TRAFFIC-Europe has initiated the first global analysis of French trade in live CITES-listed animals at an international level. The study has shown that live reptile imports increased by 120% during the 1990s and that 93% of African grey parrots *Psittacus erithacus* and Senegal parrots *Poicephalus senegalus*, both listed on Appendix II of CITES, were taken from the wild. It is hoped that this study will serve as a basis for further examination of various aspects of wildlife trade in France.

Source: *TRAFFIC Dispatches* (2003), 21, 11.

Conservation importance of France's DOM-TOMs is highlighted

France has a number of so-called DOM-TOMs, or overseas departments and territories, that are astonishingly rich in birds. The DOM-TOMs are home to 1,265 regularly nesting species, 65 of which are globally threatened. French Polynesia alone has 25 globally threatened species, four of them Critically Endangered. The Ligue pour la Protection des Oiseaux (LPO) has collaborated with the French committee of IUCN to produce a range of communications materials to raise awareness of the global importance of the DOM-TOMs. In spite of conservation activities in the DOM-TOMs, the number of threatened species continues to rise and LPO is encouraging the French Government to take a lead in protecting the valuable biodiversity of these areas.

Source: *World Birdwatch* (2003), 25(4), 3.

Good news for Zino's petrels

Zino's petrel *Pterodroma madeira* is Europe's rarest bird, found only on the island of Madeira. There have been two pieces of recent good news for this Critically Endangered species. Firstly, a new colony, containing 19 burrows, 15 of them occupied, has been discovered on Madeira. Secondly, a campaign by SPEA (BirdLife in Portugal) to resite a radar station on the island has resulted in the Portuguese Ministry of National Defence choosing a new location for the station which, although nearby, will have less impact on breeding birds.

Source: *World Birdwatch* (2003), 25(4), 7.

North Eurasia

Resolution to tackle mining issues in Siberia and the Russian Far East

The Sosnovka Coalition is a Russia-wide network of NGOs that has been working on natural resources management issues for the past 5 years. In September 2003 the coalition met in the Tunka National Park in Buryatiya to look for the first time at the issue of mining in Siberia and the Russian Far East. The most serious threats from mining are in Buryatiya, Kamchatka, Magadan, Chukotka, Yakutiya and Krasnoyarskii Krai. At the meeting, attendees adopted a resolution that, amongst other things, calls for continued public monitoring of environmental

conditions in key mining area, the reclamation of former mines that are considered a public health hazard and the continuation of the lobbying of Russian Federation agencies to separate the state environmental monitoring and control service from the Ministry of Natural Resources.

Source: *Taiga News* (2003), 45, 1.

Work begins to restore part of the Danube Delta

More than 6 km of dykes have been removed on Tataru Island in the Ukrainian part of the Danube Delta as the first part of a project to restore the natural flooding regime for this part of the river. The restoration of Tataru Island is part of work on the sustainable development of the Ukrainian Danube Delta being undertaken by the island's owners, Izmail Forestry, and WWF. Sustainable tourism, forestry, fisheries and hunting will mean a safe future for the habitat and local people.

Source: *Marine Pollution Bulletin* (2003), 46(12), 1520.

North Africa and Middle East

Marsh Arabs begin process of reclaiming Iraq's wetlands

The Marsh Arabs in southern Iraq have given up waiting for the international community to assist in the restoration of wetlands that were drained by Saddam Hussein, and have begun breaching dykes and shutting down pumping stations in an attempt to reestablish the marshes. Between 200 and 300 km² of land has now been inundated as people start to return to their ancient way of life. At one time, the marshes covered between 15,000 and 20,000 km² and were described by UNEP as a biodiversity centre of global importance. Some areas that have been inundated, such as Hawr al Awhad in the north-west of the Central marsh, are recovering well but there are concerns elsewhere about increasing salinity levels hampering the recovery of species such as the common reed *Phragmites australis*, which is a dominant plant in the ecosystem. However, some believe that with their knowledge of managing the marshes, the Marsh Arabs have, by and large, chosen breach sites that would have been picked by a qualified water engineer.

Source: *New Scientist* (2003), 180(2415), 6-7.

Gulf states sign agreement on environment and wildlife protection

On 17 June 2003 the United Arab Emirates and Bahrain signed an agreement to strengthen cooperation in the field of environment and wildlife protection. The Abu Dhabi Environmental Research and Wildlife Development Agency and the Bahraini General Commission for the Protection of Marine Resources, Environment and Wildlife agreed to protect endangered species such as dugong *Dugong dugon*, sea turtles, houbara bustard *Chlamydotis undulata* and Arabian oryx *Oryx leucoryx*. In addition, the two organisations are committed to protect wild plants and support sustainable management of fisheries.

Source: *Marine Turtle Newsletter* (2003), 102, 29.

Sub-Saharan Africa

Increases in protected land in Liberia

In November 2003 Liberia announced the protection of more than 68,500 ha of mostly intact forest to help safeguard the world's largest known population of the Critically Endangered western chimpanzee *Pan troglodytes verus*. The head of Liberia's interim government, Gyude Bryant, published three new bills that represent a 60% increase in protected areas and a dramatic reform of Liberia's natural resource conservation policies. The Sapo National Park will increase by 50,000 ha and the creation of the Nimba Nature Reserve will protect an additional 13,500 ha. Scientists believe that 600,000 western chimpanzees once lived throughout western Africa but fewer than 25,000 remain.

Source: http://www.conservation.org/xp/news/press_releases/2003/111303.xml

New population of gorillas discovered in Cameroon

Between December 2000 and February 2001, a faunistic survey was undertaken in the Yabassi region of south-western Cameroon, which still contains relatively pristine forests. These forests include the Ebo (1,400 km²) and the Ndokbou (>1,000 km²). The survey unexpectedly revealed the presence of a small population of gorillas *Gorilla gorilla* in the Ebo; the only other population present today

north of the Sanaga is that of the Takamanda area on the Nigerian border some 180 km to the north (this is the subspecies *G. g. dielhi*), while *G. g. gorilla* occurs only south of the Sanaga. Other primates found in this survey include drill *Mandrillus leucophaeus*, Preuss's monkey *Cercopithecus preussi*, red colobus *Procolobus presussi* and chimpanzee *Pan troglodytes*. All of these species are widespread and still fairly common in Ndokbou and Ebo. Commercial hunting and logging are nevertheless serious threats to the species in these forests. In February 2003 two French biologists revisited these forests but found that none of the emergency measures proposed to halt poaching had been put into practice.

Source: *African Primates* (2001), 5, 3–7 (Published in 2003).

Vaccination of Ethiopian wolves against rabies

There are thought to be fewer than 500 adult Ethiopian wolves *Canis simensis* left in the wild and half of these are found in the Bale Mountains in southern Ethiopia. Since September 2003, 28 wolves have died of rabies in the Web Valley, a core wolf area. In addition, 34 domestic dogs have contracted rabies in and around the Web Valley. In response to this outbreak, the Ethiopian Wolf Conservation Programme (EWCP) has teamed up with veterinarians from the Ethiopian Wildlife Conservation Organisation to undertake a domestic dog and wolf vaccination campaign. Eight wolves were captured and vaccinated in the first 48 hours. Staff from the EWCP are also working with staff in the Bale Mountains National Park, combing the park for sick or dead wolves and livestock, collecting samples for diagnosis and analysis and inoculating any remaining unvaccinated domestic dogs.

Source: http://www.canids.org/bulletins/EW_vaccination.htm

Chimpanzee populations increasing in Uganda

A census undertaken by the Wildlife Conservation Society and the Jane Goodall Institute from mid-1999 to mid-2002 has estimated that the population of chimpanzees *Pan troglodytes* in Uganda is currently 4,950. This compares to a previous estimate of 3,000–4,000. The census covered all major forest blocks in western Uganda including Budongo Forest Reserve down to Bwindi Impenetrable National Park on the border

with the Democratic Republic of Congo. Kibale National Park has over 25% of Uganda's chimpanzees, and other forests of importance include Budongo and Bugoma Forest Reserves and Ruwenzori Mountains National Park.

Source: <http://allafrica.com/stories/200311100581.html>

Abalone fishing ban planned in South Africa

The abalone or perlemoen *Haliotis midae* is a mollusc found in the shallow coastal waters off South Africa. Numbers have plummeted because of overharvesting. Over 95% of specimens harvested are destined for international markets, particularly in China where it is prized by gourmets. On 18 August 2003 the Government of South Africa published a draft policy which would see a moratorium placed on the recreational fishing of abalone. Some coastal communities depend heavily on abalone fishing for their income and TRAFFIC believes that any regulation of the trade should involve consumer states in monitoring and regulating the trade both to stem the lucrative illegal trade and ensure the sustainability of the resource.

Source: *TRAFFIC Bulletin* (2003), 19(3), 117.

Poachers target great white sharks

There are concerns that despite 13 years of official protection in South Africa, great white sharks *Carcharodon carcharias* may be targeted by poachers. In South Africa, great white shark teeth are sold for between £15 and £30, while a jaw may fetch £400. Some collectors may pay up to £10,000 for a large jaw. The village of Gansbaai, 100 km east of Cape Town, is the world's Mecca for those wanting to go cage-diving with great white sharks. It has been shown that a large percentage of the South African great white shark population visits Dyer Island off Gansbaai. Illegal fishing at this migratory bottleneck could have a devastating effect on the population.

Source: *BBC Wildlife* (2004), 22(1), 19.

Southern right whale populations on the increase

In the 1920s, there were thought to be only c. 300 southern right whales *Eubaleana australis* left in the wild, and the species has been protected since 1935. The latest counts from waters around the southern coast of South Africa revealed the largest number in the survey's

30-year history. A total of 845 southern right whales were seen during the 7-day aerial survey, an increase of 169 on the previous years figure. There are now thought to be 9,000–10,000 right whales in the whole of the southern hemisphere. However, the situation for the Atlantic northern right whale *E. glacialis* is still precarious, with a very small population of only c. 300. The north Pacific species of right whale *E. japonica* may be even more threatened.

Source: *Marine Pollution Bulletin* (2003), 46(12), 1521.

New date for extinction of the dodo

The dodo *Raphus cucullatus* has become a symbol of extinction, and the English phrase 'dead as a dodo' has become a common way of expressing this. The dodo was a flightless bird from Mauritius that weighed c. 23 kg and was hunted to extinction. The last confirmed sighting, by Volkert Evertsz on an islet off Mauritius, was in 1662, though an escaped slave claimed to have seen one in 1674. A statistical method has now been used to establish the actual extinction date as 1690, almost 30 years after the last confirmed sighting. In most cases the extinction of a species can be inferred from records of sightings or from collections of individual specimens. However, in cases where a species becomes increasingly rare before its extinction, as is the case with the dodo, the animal or plant may continue to exist unseen for many years.

Source: *Nature* (2003), 426(6964), 245.

South and South-east Asia

Illegal ivory trade continues in India

Despite a national ban since the 1970s, the illegal trade in elephant ivory continues in India, according to a report released by TRAFFIC in June 2003. The most active production and collection areas for raw ivory are Orissa, Assam, Uttar Pradesh and Uttaranchal and the most active markets for worked ivory are Murshidabad in West Bengal, Jaipur and Udaipur in Rajasthan, and Kochi and Thiruvananthapuram in Kerala. The four main sources of ivory are raw ivory from locally-poached Asian elephants, domesticated elephants in India, smuggled African elephant ivory and pre-ban

stocks in India. The TRAFFIC report urges the Government of India to take immediate action to establish why the ban is being regularly breached.

Source: *TRAFFIC Dispatches* (2003), 21, 7.

India bans ivory trade and confiscates stocks

On 27 August 2003 the Supreme Court of India upheld an amendment to India's *Wildlife (Protection) Act 1972* that banned the trade in imported ivory. The Court also ordered the Indian Government to repossess ivory held by traders. It was ruled that traders may pursue their case for a certificate of ownership to allow them to keep legally acquired ivory. Idols and images of gods made out of ivory were ordered to be kept in museums to reflect Indian traditions and culture.

Source: *TRAFFIC Bulletin* (2003), 19(3), 121.

Bangladesh cracks down on illegal bird trade

The Government of Bangladesh has launched a campaign to deal with illegal bird trapping that is threatening over 80 species, many of which are globally threatened. Police and paramilitary forces are being deployed to intercept poachers, and awareness campaigns are being launched to urge local communities to combat illegal netting and trading of wild birds. In October 2003 the government banned hunting and poaching of all birds just before winter when about a million migratory birds arrive from Europe, particularly Russia. The main focus of commercial exploitation are the wetlands located in north-eastern Sylhet and Mymensingh, where thousands of ducks, geese and egrets flock between December and February.

Source: <http://www.oneworld.net/article/view/72981/1/>

Turtle may be facing extinction

There is thought to be only one East Asian softshell turtle *Amyda cartilaginea* left in the wild, in Vietnam's Hoan Kiem Lake. Specialists from the Wildlife Conservation Society recently observed the turtle in what may be its last known habitat. Other individuals may exist in the Red River floodplain but the only recent sighting is that of a five-foot individual near Mgoc Son Temple Island on the north end of Hoan Kiem Lake. Many of the freshwater turtles and tortoises that occur in South-east Asia are threatened by collection for the local, national and international food markets

and for pets. China has restricted the import of all turtles and tortoises from Cambodia, Thailand and Indonesia, which is a vital first step to ensure their long-term protection.

Source: *Marine Pollution Bulletin* (2003), 46(12), 1522.

Rare cat recorded from wildlife sanctuary in Sarawak

The Bornean bay cat *Catopuma badia* is a small cat with rounded ears and a long tail. Little is known about this species. It is similar to the much more widespread Asian golden cat that is found throughout South-east Asia. A Bornean bay cat has been filmed by a camera trap set up in the Lanjak-Entimau Wildlife Sanctuary in Sarawak, Malaysia, as part of a project run by the Sarawak Bioiversity Centre and IUCN. The Lanjak-Entimau Wildlife Sanctuary is managed by the Sarawak Forestry Department and forms part of a 1.1 million ha transboundary conservation reserve with the adjoining Betung Kerihun National Park in West Kalimantan, Indonesia.

Source: *ITTO Tropical Forest Update* (2003), 13(3), 25.

Logging banned in Java

The Indonesian Government has announced an end to all logging in Java as a way of protecting water supplies and the remaining natural forests. The current demand for water on Java is 38 billion m³ per annum while current supplies run at only 27 billion m³. The government plans to undertake significant reforestation projects on land currently used for water-intensive agriculture such as rice farming. Reforestation projects targeting 1 million ha by 2005 have already been announced. Java's forest cover is currently c. 5% and forest is still being cleared for agriculture.

Source: *Tigerpaper Forest News* (2003), 17(3), 12.

Indonesian police arrest green turtle poachers

Police on the Indonesian island of Bali say that they have arrested five poachers and rescued 120 Endangered green turtles *Chelonia mydas*. The five, from Madura island off eastern Java, face a maximum sentence of 5 years in jail and a fine of 100 million rupiah (\$12,000) if convicted. The turtles have been released into the sea. The arrests follow international pressure on Indonesia to crack down on the poaching of threatened species.

Source: *Marine Turtle Newsletter* (2003), 102, 30.

Threatened Species Program launched in the Philippines

The Haribon Foundation for the Conservation of Natural Resources has launched the Threatened Species Program to conserve endemic species and their habitats in the Philippines. The Program will focus on six island groups that harbour endemic plant and animal species and will use four strategies to support local conservation initiatives: (1) site-based conservation groups will be given technical and financial support, (2) research grants will be given to students and conservation practitioners to answer questions about the biology of threatened species, (3) field courses in conservation ecology will further the development of Filipino field ecologists, and (4) the sharing of conservation experiences will be promoted through support of publications in local and international journals and attendance at symposia.

Source: *World Birdwatch* (2003), 25(4), 4.

East Asia

Reintroduction programme for giant pandas in China

A plan has been formulated to release captive-bred giant pandas *Ailuropoda melanoleuca* into the wild in China. If the plan goes ahead, it will be the first time that a reintroduction programme has been attempted for the species. The £10 million project will involve the establishment of semi-natural areas in Wolong in Shaanxi Province where the animals will initially be released. The animals will slowly be weaned away from humans and then will hopefully breed naturally. Almost 2,400 people in Wolong are being relocated and the vacated land planted with bamboo. According to WWF there are currently 1,000 giant pandas in the wild and a total of 280 have been bred in captivity since 1963.

Source: *BBC Wildlife* (2003), 21(11), 18.

New species creates problem for whale conservation

In 1998 a whale carcass was found on a remote island in the Japan Sea. The remains have now been identified as a new species, *Balaenoptera omurai*. Scientists have long thought that there were more than just six recognized species in the genus *Balaenoptera*, the baleen whales. Eight specimens found in the late 1970s were thought to be from a new species but definite proof was lacking.

An analysis of all nine animals has concluded that they all belong to a previously unknown species. It has also been confirmed that Eden's whale *Balaenoptera edeni* is distinct from Bryde's whale *B. brydei* bringing the total number of *Balaenoptera* species to eight. The Japanese whaling community catches about 50 Bryde's whales in the western northern Pacific each year for research purposes and estimates that there are 22,000 Bryde's whales in that part of the ocean. This new discovery calls into question the true identity of the species the Japanese are harvesting and the possible conservation implications.

Source: *Nature* (2003), 426(6964), 219.

North America

Canadian Boreal Initiative is launched

Canada has seen the launch of the Canadian Boreal Initiative that has a common vision to protect at least 600 million ha of boreal and taiga forests as well as a commitment to the highest standards of management. The initiative is backed by forestry industry giants Abitibi-Consolidated, Domtar, Alberta-Pacific and Tembec, as well as indigenous peoples and environmental organizations.

Source: *Taiga News* (2003), 45, 3.

Great Lakes receive Canadian funding

The Canadian Minister of the Environment has announced funding totalling \$1.9 million from the Great Lakes Sustainability Fund to support 40 restoration projects in the Great Lakes Basin. Projects will take place in so-called Areas of Concern that have been identified as being environmentally degraded. Through the Great Lakes Sustainability Fund, the Government of Canada is investing \$30 million over 5 years to help restore the remaining Canadian Areas of Concern. This funding is an important component of the Government of Canada's Great Lakes Basin 2020 Action Plan.

Source: *Marine Pollution Bulletin* (2003), 46(10), 1218.

Huge area of boreal forest is protected in Canada

The Deh Cho First Nations (DCFN) comprise 11 small aboriginal communities in the upper reaches of the Mackenzie River

in north-west Canada. Until recently, most of the DCFN lands have been managed and controlled by the government. However, the Deh Cho and the Government of Canada have now reached an agreement on resource development and interim protection. As a result, lands will be withdrawn from government control and management while resource assessments are made. The Mackenzie River is one of the world's last remaining great rivers in a pristine state. Its watershed covers an area of 1.8 million km², one sixth the size of Canada. This latest agreement means that a total of 10.1 million ha of pristine northern boreal forest and wetland habitat are now in a network on culturally and ecologically significant areas.

Source: *Arborvitae* (2003), 23, 5.

FSC-certified Harry Potter merchandise in Canada

The Harrop-Procter Community Forest in British Columbia, Canada, produced 500 FSC-certified broomsticks from its eco-forestry project for the launch of the latest *Harry Potter* book. Canadian versions of the *Harry Potter* books were published on forest-friendly paper. However, this was not the case in other countries. In Germany for example, it was claimed that books were printed on paper from Norske Skog, which has been found to be sourcing timber from old-growth Norwegian forests.

Source: *Taiga News* (2003), 45, 2.

Scientists attack Endangered Species Act logjam

Ecologists and conservationists are becoming increasingly angry at what they see as the Bush administration's attempt to hobble the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Since 2001, species have been added to the ESA at an average rate of eight per year, compared to 65 per year during the Clinton years and 59 per year during George Bush Senior's presidency. Critics argue that not enough funding is being sought to support the work of the ESA. The administration argues that progress is being made through cooperation with landowners and that the drop in listings is because of court orders from environmental groups requesting protection orders which have left the US Fish and Wildlife Service short of resources to list new species. However, in April 2003 the House of Representatives introduced an amendment to the ESA requiring only empirical data and peer-reviewed science to be used for species listings

and critical habitat designation. This will work against species where there is little currently available information on status.

Source: *Nature* (2003), 426(6967), 592.

Endangered tortoises breed at Fort Worth Zoo

In September 2003, 16 endangered Asian brown mountain tortoises *Manouria emys* hatched at Fort Worth Zoo in the US. The hatchlings' parents had been part of a shipment of over 3,000 turtles and tortoises destined for China's illegal food trade that had been confiscated by Hong Kong Customs. The brown mountain tortoise is native to India, Malaysia and Indonesia and is highly prized for use in traditional medicine. Fort Worth Zoo adopted six of the confiscated tortoises with the primary goal of establishing a breeding colony.

Source: *Species* (2003), 40, 6.

New bill threatens Everglades restoration plan

The passage of a sugar industry-backed bill threatens the restoration plan currently underway in the Everglades National Park in Florida. Since the passing of the Everglades Forever Act of 1994, Florida and the federal government have been working on an \$8 billion restoration programme for the area. The recent bill will now allow polluters another 10 years to meet stringent guidelines on phosphorus levels, the new deadline being 2016. Phosphorus runoff from the sugar industry and urban sprawl kills plants and wildlife habitat in the Everglades. In the 1994 Act, phosphorus levels had to reach no more than 10 parts per billion by 2006. Scientists also believe that there are problems over the way in which the phosphorus levels are being measured, allowing some areas to drastically exceed the guideline level while the overall figure remains below 10 parts per billion.

Source: *National Parks* (2003), 77 (9–10), 10–11.

Central America and Caribbean

Bermudians rally to save national bird

The cahow or Bermuda petrel *Pterodroma cahow* is the national bird of Bermuda,

although there are only thought to be 200 individuals in the wild. In 2003, 70 pairs of cahow raised 40 young following a successful Cahow Recovery Program. The species nests on four tiny islets off Bermuda and just weeks before the birds were due to return to these sites the area was hit by Hurricane Fabian, probably the most severe storm to hit Bermuda since 1899. The exposed Castle Islands Nature Reserve, which includes the cahow's nesting grounds, was severely damaged. The birds themselves were at sea but nesting burrows were damaged. Members of the Cahow Recovery Program and an army of volunteers helped to rebuild and resite the burrows, although pairs of cahows may be disrupted because of their fidelity to the original sites. In 2004 there are plans to translocate near-fledged chicks to nearby Nonsuch Island Living Museum to try and establish a new colony.

Source: *World Birdwatch* (2003), 25(4), 2.

Massive captive breeding effort to save endangered toad

Zoos from all over the US and Canada are jointly contributing thousands of captive-bred Puerto Rican crested toad *Peltophryne lemur* tadpoles to help restore the population of this Critically Endangered species. Only 300 toads are thought to remain in the wild, although this is 100 more than 10 years ago. In the last decade, nearly 100,000 tadpoles have been released into the wild. Currently the toad is only found in nine breeding ponds in Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

Source: *International Zoo News* (2003), 50(8), 497.

South America

Sharp rise in deforestation in the Amazon

The deforestation rate in Brazil's Amazon jumped by 20% in 2002 according to preliminary figures from the Brazilian Environment Ministry. In 2001, 18,166 km² of the Amazon was deforested but this rose to 25,476 km² in 2002, the largest increase since 1995. The main threat is the conversion of forest to soy plantations, with Brazil expected to become the world's biggest soy producer in the next few years.

Source: *Arborviate* (2003), 23, 3.

Threat to Peru's only marine reserve

Paracas is Peru's only marine reserve and WWF has expressed deep concern over plans for a fractionation plant and port within the reserve to service the controversial Camisea oil pipeline project. The Inter-American Development Bank (IADB) has approved \$300 million for Camisea even though the Export-Import Bank has rejected the project on environmental grounds. The Peruvian Government has signed an environmental accord with IADB and other backers of the Camisea project that contains promises to clean up the bay if problems occur. However, WWF does not think that this accord will protect the Paracas marine reserve or address the Camisea project's serious planning flaws, and is working closely with the Peruvian Government and their partners to mitigate any threats the project poses.

Source: *Marine Pollution Bulletin* (2003), 46(11), 1363.

Concern over plan to export Argentinian parrots

Argentina has made an application to export parrots as pets to the US. If accepted, Argentina will be the first country to export wild birds for the US pet trade since a law was enacted in 1992 to prevent species being wiped out by commercial hunters. Argentina is South America's biggest exporter of wild birds and currently exports blue-fronted Amazons *Amazonia aestiva*, the subject of the US application, to Europe and elsewhere. Ecologists and conservationists have expressed concern that not enough resources are allocated to monitoring the collection of birds or to address the possibility of exported parrots escaping into the wild and transmitting exotic diseases to native birds. The blue-fronted Amazon is not threatened but opponents of the application claim it could set off a rash of applications to export other species, potentially depleting wild stocks.

Source: *Nature* (2004), 427(6969), 4.

Bank's logging project may bring unexpected gain

Boston-based Fleet Bank invested \$10 million in Bosques SA, a Chilean timber company who were planning to log 150,000 ha of pristine old-growth Valdivian temperate rainforest. The collapse of Bosques led Fleet Bank to try and recoup their money by converting the forest into eucalyptus plantations. Barely

1,000 ha of forest had been cut before Chile's Supreme Court stopped further work, insisting that an environmental impact assessment must accompany the sale of permits to convert the forest into plantations. This made the land virtually unsaleable. It is hoped that Fleet Bank will now take a more enlightened approach to the future of the area.

Source: *BBC Wildlife* (2003), 21(12), 23.

Loophole threatens populations of alerce in Chile

Alerce *Fitzroya cupressoides* is a slow-growing, Endangered conifer species that is endemic to the wet temperate forests of Chile and Argentina. In Chile, where only 263,000 ha of alerce remain, it has been illegal to fell the tree since 1976. However, the ban does not apply to dead trees, and thousands of acres of alerce have been lost through deliberate burning or through the removal of sapwood that causes the trees to die. A lawsuit has now been filed against the director of CONAF, the National Forestry Corporation, for failing to comply sufficiently with its regulatory role. The Chilean NGO Defensores del Bosque Chileno has launched a campaign calling for a complete ban on all commercial trade in the species until current legislation is tightened.

Source: *TRAFFIC Bulletin* (2003), 19(3), 115.

Pacific

World's largest tuna fishery may at last be effectively managed

The imminent entry in to force of the Convention for the Conservation and Management of Highly Migratory Fish Stocks in the Western and Central Pacific Ocean offers the possibility for effective conservation and management of the world's largest tuna stock. The tuna fishery of the western and central Pacific Ocean is worth c. \$2 billion annually and covers an area exceeding 30 million km². Yearly landings exceed 2 million tonnes, about a third of all tuna landed worldwide. The fishery is of vital economic importance to many Pacific island countries. The Convention has been ratified by 12 countries and only one more ratification is needed before it comes into force.

Source: *TRAFFIC Dispatches* (2003), 21, 3.

Island state bans shark fishing

The Pacific island state of Palau has become the world's first nation to ban commercial fishing of sharks. Palau has also completely outlawed finning. The new law aims to restrict fishing in order to accommodate activities that provide better returns, such as diving, and to reduce the impact of foreign tuna fishing vessels. Under the new law foreign fishing vessels will be banned from operating within a 50 nautical mile exclusion zone and also requires the immediate release of any shark caught inadvertently.

Source: *BBC Wildlife* (2004), 22(1), 21.

Possible sighting of a rail long thought to be extinct

The last definite record of the Samoan moorhen *Gallinula pacifica* was in 1873 but the species has been listed as Critically Endangered rather than Extinct because extensive habitat remains on the Samoan island of Savai'i. On 5 October 2003 Dion Hobcroft was leading a nature tour on Savai'i. As the party were making their way along a narrow forest trail on Mount Sili Sili, a distinctive low gulping sound was heard and two medium-sized all dark blackish forest rails were flushed. Hobcroft has no doubt that these were Samoan moorhens and hopes to return to Savai'i in 2004 to confirm the species' continued existence.

Source: *World Birdwatch* (2003), 25(4), 6.

Australia/Antarctica/New Zealand

Facial tumours kill one-third of all Tasmanian devils

A mysterious disease has wiped out 90% of some populations of Tasmanian devils *Sarcophilus harrisii* in the past 3 years. A workshop held in October 2003 was told that facial tumours may have killed 50,000 of Tasmania's total population of 150,000 Tasmanian devils. The first confirmed cases of facial tumours were in the 1990s. These tumours first appear around the jaw and neckline and it is thought that the causative agent is a retrovirus. On a positive note, in areas where devil numbers have plummeted, such as eastern Tasmania, the disease has a much lower transmission rate. Historical records also suggest that there have been three previous massive declines in numbers in the past 140 years and it is possible that the disease is latent in

animals and only appears above a certain population density. The population may thus stabilize and eventually recover.

Source: *New Scientist* (2003), 180(2418), 9.

Cane toads may be poisoning many of Australia's snakes

The cane toad *Bufo marinus* was introduced to Queensland in 1937 and has since been moving steadily north, south and west. Cane toads have a toxin that may be enough to kill many snake species that feed upon them. Researchers at the University of Sydney have identified 49 snake species that could be at risk from cane toad poisoning by 2030. For seven of these species, eating just one cane toad could deliver a fatal dose. It is estimated that 30% of snake species could be at risk of cane toad poisoning. There are currently no effective control measures for cane toads and thus no immediate prospect of reducing the threat to snake species.

Source: *New Scientist* (2003), 180(2425), 18.

Huge new protected area in Australia

A 98,000 km² area of the central desert of Australia has been declared a protected area and transferred to Aboriginal management. The Ngaanyatjarra indigenous area, approximately twice the size of Switzerland, aims to protect the culture of its Aboriginal inhabitants as well as the fauna and flora of areas largely untouched by European influences, particularly pastoral grazing. It is the 15th indigenous area to be declared in Australia and incorporates parts of the Gibson, Great Sandy and Great Victoria deserts.

Source: *Tigerpaper Forest News* (2003), 17(3), 12.

Australia has record seizure of endangered species

In the first week of September 2003 customs officers examining two shipping containers that had arrived in Sydney, Australia, found 160 kg of illegally imported wildlife products. Further property searches uncovered body parts from tigers, snakes and rhinos, 40 kg of pangolin scales taken from c. 120 animals, and other plants and animals. All of the species are used in traditional medicines. Since 1999, the Australian Government has seized more than 17,000 illegal wildlife imports and exports, most of them small imports by individuals. Charges are expected to be made under Australia's Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999,

where the maximum penalties for an individual caught breaching the law are fines of up to \$110,000 and up to 10 years in prison.

Source: *Marine Pollution Bulletin* (2003), 46(11), 1362.

Much needed protection for orange-fronted parakeets

Predation has caused populations of orange-fronted parakeets or kakariki *Cyanoramphus malherbi* in New Zealand to fall by 75% in 3 years, leaving less than 150 birds in the wild. New Zealand's Conservation Minister has recently announced a proposal to establish 10 South Island 'Arks' where stoats, rats and possums will be controlled during pest plague years. The programme should be flexible enough to ensure predator control can occur whenever and wherever it is needed. However, even under this proposal, large parts of

new Zealand's native forests will still lack effective predator control. New Zealand's Department of Conservation controls stoats on little more than 2%, and possums on little more than 12%, of land within national parks.

Source: *Forest & Bird Conservation News* (2003), 132, 1.

Conservationists call for moratorium on marine farms in New Zealand

In New Zealand Aquaculture Management Areas (AMAs) are places where aquaculture will be allowed in the sea. Conservationists are calling on the Government to maintain a moratorium on new marine farms until areas needed for marine reserves are set aside and AMAs are decided. Regional councils have already begun the process of defining AMAs. There are concerns that the environmental impacts of aquaculture

are not being fully considered in the process of defining AMAs and it is important that marine reserves are set aside before the aquaculture moratorium is lifted.

Source: *Forest & Bird Conservation News* (2003), 132, 4.

The *Briefly* section in this issue was written and compiled by Simon Mickleburgh and Martin Fisher, with an additional contribution from Bob Dowsett. Contributions from authoritative published sources (including web sites) are always welcome. Please send contributions to Martin Fisher, Fauna & Flora International, Great Eastern House, Tenison Road, Cambridge, CB1 2TT, UK, or by e-mail to oryx@fauna-flora.org