



# Kingfisher

*News and Comment about  
Wildlife Conservation from  
Home and Abroad.*

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*News and Comment about  
Wildlife and Conservation  
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**Edited by Richard Fitter**

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## **Our Mammal Predators**

THE ROLE played by mammal predators in the countryside might be expected to give rise to controversy, but there was a surprising and gratifying sense of common purpose at the most successful meeting on this subject, held in the rooms of the Linnean Society of London on March 25, under the able chairmanship of Lord Porchester, Chairman of the Game Research Association. The meeting was sponsored by the Fauna Preservation Society, the Council for Nature and the Society for the Promotion of Nature Reserves, and eleven other voluntary bodies and four government departments participated, representing such diverse interests as hunting, shooting, game research and preservation, angling, forestry, agriculture, biology and conservation.

Unanimous recommendations included the undesirability of legalising the gassing of badgers, a request to the Government to look into the control of the use of strychnine, cyanide gas and other poisons in vertebrate pest control,

a condemnation of the introduction or reintroduction of mammal predators, and a call for more research on their population, ecology and control. Perhaps potentially the most important recommendation for the future was the call to the British Field Sports Society, the Council for Nature, the Fauna Preservation Society and the Game Research Association jointly to prepare a pamphlet incorporating a code of behaviour for the control of mammal predators. Such a pamphlet could be circulated to all gamekeepers, water bailiffs and others with a special interest in this sphere.

## **Check to Armed Trespassers**

As the Home Secretary has added to his Firearms Bill a clause

making it an offence to trespass on private land armed with a firearm and suitable ammunition, Brian Harrison, M.P., has withdrawn his private member's Bill with the same aim. The penalties proposed for the new offence are three months' imprisonment, a fine of up to £100, or both. Teesmouth Bird Club has issued a leaflet describing the present position of the law relating to airguns. Copies are available for distribution to schools, youth clubs, museums and gunsmiths at 38s. per 1000, from 85 Junction Rd., Norton, Stockton-on-Tees, Co. Durham.

The volunteer wardens of the Old Slade Lane nature reserve will soon have to be paid danger money, if the rate of irresponsible shooting goes on there as at present, writes Ruth Levy in the *Middle Thames Bird Bulletin*. They escort numerous youths armed with guns to the police, who are fortunately very co-operative. Old Slade Lane is a reserve of the Berkshire, Buckinghamshire and Oxfordshire Naturalists' Trust, under the wardenship of G. Watkin Williams, and its sign board can be seen from the Slough end of the new M.4 motorway.

### **Threat to the Grand Canyon**

The Lower Colorado River Basin Project, involving the construction of dams affecting the flow of the river through the Grand Canyon, represents a serious threat to one of the major natural tourist attractions of North America. Two dams would reduce the flow of the

river and turn it into a fluctuating dead-water reservoir throughout the Grand Canyon National Monument and for twelve miles into the Grand Canyon National Park. The scheme has been devised by the Bureau of Reclamation, not to conserve water, but to provide funds from hydroelectricity to bolster up an irrigation scheme in Central Arizona that cannot stand on its own feet. Apart from its implications for the Grand Canyon, the success of the project would set a disastrous precedent that might ruin other national parks with potential reservoir sites within their boundaries, such as the world famous Yellowstone Park. The project is at present before Congress in the form of two bills, which are expected to receive early hearings. The National Audubon Society fears that they will be hard to stop without a massive protest from concerned citizens.

### **The New Reptile Chic**

To be really in, according to an élite American fashion magazine, the fashion-conscious woman must realise that this is the year of the reptile. She must wear boots or shoes made from alligator or lizard skins. And some genius on Madison Avenue has coined the slogan, "Lizards that used to doze in the sun now dance in the dark". The correspondent of the *Audubon Magazine* who reports this points out that alligators are seriously decreasing in the United States as a result of large-scale



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poaching to satisfy the fashion market: "As long as women will pay up to \$90 for one pair of shoes made from skins, the Everglades poacher will defy the law and risk his neck to provide them". And this goes for the African crocodile too, which is equally threatened.

### **Rhinos Back in Swaziland**

The Fauna Preservation Society has presented two white or square-lipped rhinos to the Mlilwane Game Sanctuary in Swaziland. This has been done partly to help Mlilwane, which is the only game reserve in Swaziland, and partly as a contribution towards solving the white rhino problem in Natal. Here the conservation of the rare white rhino, found wild only in Natal and on the Upper Nile, has been so successful that their numbers have outgrown the habitat available to them in the Umfolozi National Park. It has become necessary to sell the surplus to zoos or make them available for translocation elsewhere. The Kruger National Park in South Africa has taken no fewer than 86 in the past three years, and some have also gone to Rhodesia, both within the former range of the white rhino. Mlilwane, a private enterprise run by Terence Reilly, is now open to visitors. (*Oryx*, April).

### **Pesticide News at Home**

Analysis of the eggs of buzzards, merlins, kestrels, ravens, rooks, carrion crows and magpies in

northern England and southern Scotland shows a general contamination by residues of DDT, dieldrin, heptachlor and BHC, with higher levels in the birds of prey than in the crows. A recent decline in the numbers of Lakeland buzzards is probably due to pesticide residues from sheep dips, but so far the other birds concerned, except perhaps for the raven, do not show any decline attributable to pesticides. (D. A. Ratcliffe in *British Birds*, March).

Two leaflets on the safe use of pesticides in gardens are available, one issued by the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds (The Lodge, Sandy, Beds), and the other jointly by the R.S.P.B., the British Trust for Ornithology and the British Section of the International Council for Bird Preservation.

In the 1964 Annual Report of the British Section of I.C.B.P. Dr. J. S. Ash of the Game Research Association is quoted as having said that a Norfolk fruit grower was persuaded by a salesman to spray six acres of fruit-bushes with a persistent hydrocarbon as a bird deterrent. Within a week the area was littered with corpses. (N.B. The direct use of poison to control birds is of course quite illegal.)

### **Pesticide News Overseas**

FAO has recommended that in the use of pesticides for agricultural or public health purposes all possible efforts should be made to minimise the loss of aquatic life, the degradation of the aquatic environment with its consequent loss or reduc-

tion of aquatic stocks, and the danger to human beings through the consumption of fish contaminated by pesticides.

Pesticide residues in a volume under one part per million were found in the remains of a whooping crane, almost the rarest bird in the world, found dead on the Aransas wildlife refuge in Texas. Only 42 whooping cranes remain in the wild.

The Shell Chemical Company has announced the successful testing of a systemic pesticide, an organic phosphate called bidrin, which controls the elm bark beetle, transmitter of the deadly Dutch elm fungus disease. This might well revolutionise the treatment of the disease in the United States, where millions of birds have died in recent years following the spraying of DDT to control Dutch elm disease.

Eight years after the start of a \$25 million campaign to eradicate the fire ant in the United States, the ant infests 11 million more acres than when the campaign began. Many people do not in fact regard the fire ant as a pest.

A deposit of four tons of the highly toxic pesticide endrin has been found in sludge deposits in a sewer at Memphis, Tennessee, which drains into the Mississippi River, scene of serious fish kills in recent years. The Defense Department found the bottoms of three industrial lakes near Denver, Colorado, caked with aldrin and dieldrin, which had leaked out of one of their plants. In an attempt

to check the deaths of wildfowl through the Denver flyway, the Department has spent \$265,000 on draining the lakes and scraping their bottoms.

### **Biological Control**

The municipality of Neptune, New Jersey, will this summer combat mosquitoes with insect-eating birds. Boy scouts and other volunteers will erect nestboxes to attract a colony of purple martins. In Washington State the Department of Natural Resources has erected nestboxes for wrens, swallows, bluebirds, chickadees and woodpeckers in its forests. It is hoped that increased numbers of these insect-eating birds will enable the Department to cut down on the use of pesticides.

### **Bounties or Pheasants?**

The payment of bounties on foxes in Minnesota has resulted in fewer pheasants, according to an analysis by John Scharf of the Minnesota Division of Fish and Game. During the past decade some \$165,000 per annum has been spent on bounties in Minnesota, most of it on foxes. This is because local sportsmen insist that because foxes eat pheasants, the hunting licence fees should be spent in this way. Yet fox predation is only one of the factors affecting pheasant population, and in fact the bounties have not succeeded in controlling the fox population. During this same period a great deal of land suitable for pheasants has been turned over to

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other uses. If, instead of wasting their licence money on bounties, the sportsmen of Minnesota had allowed it to be spent on buying some of this land for pheasants, they would have more pheasants to shoot today.

There is similar trouble in South Dakota, where disgruntled county hunters, whose fox bounty was cut from \$7.50 to \$2 a few years ago, are campaigning for its restoration on account of a low pheasant crop last year. They refuse to believe what is the fact, that pheasants are still more numerous in South Dakota than in the old days of high bounties.

### National Parks for Ulster

The Amenity Lands Act recently passed in Northern Ireland is the equivalent of the British National Parks Act. It sets up an Ulster Countryside Committee to perform most of the functions of our National Parks Commission, and gives the Minister of Development power to create national parks and nature reserves and to acquire land and vest it in the National Trust, which operates in Northern Ireland and the Isle of Man, but not in Scotland. Presumably the Antrim Glens with the Giant's Causeway, and the Mourne Mountains will be among the first areas to be considered as national parks in Ulster.

### It Can Be Done!

The National Trust reports that the G.P.O. has removed the unsightly telegraph poles in the Win-

nats Pass in Derbyshire and put the lines underground.

### The Ospreys Return

The Royal Society for the Protection of Birds announces the return of the osprey pair to their famous eyrie near Loch Garten in Strathpey, for the seventh year in succession. They will again be closely guarded by R.S.P.B. members, and the observation post will be open to the public between 10 a.m. and 8.30 p.m. daily. The way to the observation post is signposted from Boat of Garten, Inverness-shire.

### New Ringing Record

Once again the annual report of the Bird Ringing Committee of the British Trust for Ornithology (for 1963, just issued as a special supplement of *British Birds*) is able to announce a new record total both of 435,925 birds ringed in the British Isles, and of 14,397 recoveries of British-ringed birds. The county with the largest number (106) of ringers is, not surprisingly, Yorkshire, the largest county, followed by Kent with 57 and Essex and Surrey with 55 each. The "league table" of birds with the largest number of individuals ever ringed shows the starling continuing in top place with 386,405, followed by blackbird (283,065), blue tit (178,161) and swallow (172,626). Among the many important scientific results of the ringing scheme, which is supported by a substantial grant from the Nature Conservancy, is

the fact that we now know that the Spitsbergen population of barnacle geese winters exclusively on the Solway Firth.

### **Bud-eating Bullfinches**

A study of the food of bullfinches in Marley Wood, near Oxford, by I. Newton of the Edward Grey Institute for Field Ornithology, shows that they only attack the buds of pears and other fruit trees in years when the ash-mast crop has failed. Near Oxford this appears to be every other year. In the autumn bullfinches could be classed as useful, for they then feed largely on the seeds of bramble, nettle and dock. Three possible methods of checking the damage to fruit buds are suggested: (i) reducing the bullfinch population, especially in years when the ash-mast crop is likely to fail, below the level at which they will be limited by natural food supplies; (ii) pruning the fruit trees as late as possible, so that the least damaged twigs can be left for fruiting; and (iii) removing overgrown hedges and other cover around orchards. (*Journal of Applied Ecology*, Vol. I, No. 2.)

### **Bird Society for R.A.F.**

The Royal Air Force may join the Army and Royal Navy in having a bird-watching society, if the proposal of Sergeant F. J. Walker of R.A.F. Coltishall, Norfolk, meets with approval. He has appealed in *British Birds* for anyone interested to write to him.

Among the aims of such a society would be to put members in touch with other bird watchers and ornithological societies on their overseas tours in such places as Aden, Cyprus, Hong Kong and Singapore.

### **New Wildfowl at Slimbridge**

Two new species in the Wildfowl Trust's collection at Slimbridge are the white-headed duck from Europe and the greater kelp goose from the Falkland Islands. Peter Gladstone and Charles Martell spent six months in the Falklands rearing the seven ganders and ten geese now in quarantine at Slimbridge. The last of the wild geese left Slimbridge on March 18.

### **Casabianca**

A bird watcher, N. L. Hodson, beating out a grass fire in Northamptonshire, was amazed to see a mallard duck rise from her nest when it was completely ringed by flames. Seven of the clutch of twelve eggs were scorched, but four of the remaining five hatched out a few days later and were safely led to the water's edge 50 yards away. To achieve this end the duck had had to sit on the nest completely exposed to view. (*British Birds*, March.)

### **Blackgame in the Quantocks**

It is feared that the black grouse may be on the verge of extinction in the Quantock Hills in Somerset. J. R. H. Dowling, who records this in the latest Report of the Mid-Somerset Naturalists'

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Society, has not seen one there for two years, and suggests that the only way of saving the stock may be to introduce fresh blood.

### **Fast Fliers**

A knot ringed at Holbeach, Lincolnshire, on September 3, 1963, was recovered in Liberia, 3,500 miles away, only eight days later. Two blackcaps ringed at Beachy Head, Sussex, on September 10 and 11, 1963, respectively, diverged at startling speed, both being recovered in mid-October, one in the Lebanon and the other in the Portuguese province of Algarve, more than 2,500 miles apart.

### **Long Distance Swimmers**

A bluefin tunny, marked off California in August 1962 was recovered 4,820 miles away, in the Sea of Japan, in June 1964. In this period it grew from 23 lb. to 53 lb. Another bluefin tunny marked on the same day off California was caught again almost exactly two years later, also in Japan.

### **Wildlife on the Plain**

An article by Major Oliver Kite in *The Field* of April 15 describes the abundant wildlife that inhabits the Army training area on Salisbury Plain. Foxes, badgers, rabbits and hares are numerous, and fallow deer and harvest mice also occur. Among birds kestrels are numerous, and buzzards, harriers, stonechats and whinchats occur.

### **A Seal in the Severn**

A common seal was seen swimming up the River Severn at Epney, about six miles from Gloucester, in February. A little earlier it had been seen in some drainage ditches. (*Journal*, N. Glos.Nat.Soc., March.)

### **Pest Control by Hedgehogs**

Hedgehogs are among the most useful animals to the gardener, being insectivorous and especially fond of slugs and the black millipedes that attack potatoes and bulbs. The latest report from the Henry Doubleday Research Association, *Hedgehogs and the Gardener* (H.D.R.A., 20 Convent Lane, Bocking, Braintree, Essex; 1s. 9d.) gives many useful hints on how to encourage garden hedgehogs, including the provision of "nest-boxes" for them to spend the winter in. One important point is to desist from using pesticides, for these are liable to kill the hedgehogs, which will eat poisoned insects.

### **Whipsnade Gene Bank**

The gene bank of domestic animals maintained by the Zoological Society of London at Whipsnade now consists of small herds and flocks of the following breeds: longhorn and Chartley cattle; Cotswold, Norfolk horned, Lincoln longwool, Manx loghtan, woodland white-faced, Portland and Soay sheep; Sumatra, Indian and Old English game fowl; and silver spangled Hamburg, buff cochin, redcap and silver Dorking

domestic fowls. Skeletal and other material from any animals which die is being preserved in the British Museum (Natural History) and elsewhere, but the main object of the gene bank is to maintain breeding stocks of breeds which might otherwise become extinct.

### **Besieged by Frogs**

Hundreds of frogs, seeking their breeding pond which has been filled in by building developers, have been "besieging" Keswick Close, Tilehurst, Berkshire. According to one resident, "When you open the door, you are sometimes met by a party of frogs. Occasionally they hop into the house." The unfortunate frogs, with nowhere to breed, are now regarded as "pests" by the householders, who have summoned pest officers to their aid. How much better it would have been if the pond had been left as a local amenity in the first place!

### **How Many Anglers?**

There are 2,200,000 adult male anglers in Britain, according to a survey by Research Services Ltd. in the *Fishing Tackle Dealer*. The number of male anglers under 16 and of female anglers is not stated, but the latter figure is believed to be very small. This is in strong contrast to the United States, where more than 4½ million adult women are believed to fish. However, in Britain angling leads all other sports, being more popular than football, and much more so than golf, tennis or cycling.

### **Bacteria to the Rescue**

The waters of a brook which has been polluted by untreated sewage from Abram and Hindley in Lancashire are being purified in Pennington Flash, near Leigh, by bacteria and other minute plants. The phenomenon is being studied by the Mersey River Board according to the *Guardian*, to see whether these natural processes can be used to purify other polluted rivers in their area. In Germany such rivers are already being cleansed by being made to flow through artificial lakes.

### **Holly Wood at Dungeness**

The singular nature of the vegetation of Dungeness, now under continuous encroachment and erosion, despite having been recommended for preservation by the Nature Reserves Investigation Committee as long ago as 1945, has been revealed by a study in the *Journal of Ecology* by G. A. M. Scott. The unusual pioneer plant in the succession is the common broom, which stabilises the shingle sufficiently to allow other plants to grow, while the climax community consists of the equally unusual holly wood, at present largely confined to the area west of Lydd. This revelation of the extraordinary botanical interest of Dungeness, coupled with its known physiographic uniqueness, makes it all the more extraordinary that the Nature Conservancy has never been prepared to create a national nature reserve there.



## Hammarkjold's Redwood Memorial

On April 4 a simple ceremony in Muir Woods near San Francisco established the Hammarkjold Memorial Redwood Grove. The Save-the-Redwoods League has raised funds towards the purchase of this grove of the second tallest trees in the world, now increasingly threatened, as a memorial to the late Secretary General of the United Nations. This represents only one shot in the campaign to save much more of the surviving 300,000 acres (out of an original 1.8 million) than the 48,000 acres which exist in California State Parks today. The main attack is the campaign to create a Redwood National Park, but this is<sup>\*</sup> being fiercely resisted by local lumbering interests. For, alas, the redwoods carry a high price for their timber—a single tree may be worth \$1,500—as well as being a priceless national, and indeed world heritage.

## Ngorongoro Comes Sixth

Visitors to the Ngorongoro Crater in Tanzania often ask if it is the biggest in the world. Actually it is not strictly a crater but a caldera, a volcano which has collapsed on itself. Dr. Tamura, Chairman of the Nature Conservation Society of Japan, who visited Ngorongoro during the Nairobi conference of IUCN, and is a volcanologist, has given the answer. Ngorongoro, 19 x 16 kilometres across, is the sixth largest caldera in the world, the

largest being Kucharo in Japan, 28 x 22 km. (*Tangazo Bulletin*, No. 10.)

The latest count of the larger animals in the crater totalled 22,132, including 14,222 wildebeest, 5,038 zebra, 2,310 gazelle, and smaller numbers of eland, hippo, elephant, rhino, hartebeest, waterbuck, ostrich, lion and buffalo. (*East African Wildlife Journal*, Vol. II.)

## Meru Reserve Reopens

Meru Game Reserve in Kenya, the first tribal game reserve in Africa, and run by the Meru as a flourishing wildlife sanctuary, has been reopened. After the Somali shiftas had burned the river boat, the reserve had to be closed for security reasons.

## The Happy Valley

Durban City Council has agreed to create a bird sanctuary in the Happy Valley, a swamp on the outskirts of the city, lying between an oil refinery and a drive-in cinema. This is the culmination of a successful piece of biological control, when the native fishes known as mud brems (*Tilapia*) were introduced to control the mosquitoes, which had previously been ineffectively and expensively attacked with insecticides. The insecticides had, of course, also gravely upset the natural biological balance of the swamp, but this has now been restored. But for the success of the fish as mosquito controllers, the Happy Valley would have suffered the sad fate



of the adjacent van Riebeeck Swamp, which was drained at a cost of £80,000, and still causes trouble to the city council because its peat catches fires and burns for days on end. (*Natal Wild Life*, March.)

### **In British Guiana**

The Natural History Society of British Guiana has submitted a memorandum to the Ministry of Home Affairs, asking for various steps to be taken to save the fast diminishing wildlife of the colony, for "the bright picture painted by Sir Walter Raleigh no longer exists." The Society asks for the creation of nature reserves and sanctuaries, control of the use of pesticides and air guns, and many other basic requirements for a policy of wildlife conservation.

### **Poaching in Africa**

The President of Zambia, Dr. Kenneth Kaunda, has issued a strongly worded statement condemning the poaching of game animals and the illegal sale of their meat as "stealing the property of all Zambians." He points out that the stocks of game are being wiped out, and unless strong and quick action is taken, there will be no game to pass on to future generations. The need for this statement is shown in the last annual report of the Game Department before independence, which shows that 90 per cent of the pasture and browse in the Chilongozi Game Reserve was destroyed by pasture fires started

by poachers, 80 per cent in the Nsefu Game Reserve, and smaller proportions in other reserves. It is believed that as many as 200,000 wild animals, including over 300 elephants are poached in Zambia every year.

### **How Fast is a Cheetah?**

In *African Wild Life*, Dr. R. Bigalke has queried the statements frequently made nowadays that cheetahs can run at 70 m.p.h., and says he can find only three instances of their speed having been checked, the fastest of which was 45 m.p.h. Dr. Bernhard Grzimek has pointed out that another such record was provided by a race between greyhounds and a cheetah at Harringay race track, London, in the 1930's. The cheetah achieved 45 m.p.h., but the greyhounds only 37.5 m.p.h.

### **Elephant on Tap**

An elephant in the Kruger National Park, South Africa, was seen enjoying a drink from a tap, which it had evidently turned on itself. Then it turned the tap off again, but apparently still thirsty. So it turned the tap on again, but this time so vigorously that it fractured the water pipe. A park ranger had to scare it off so that the pipe could be repaired. (*African Wild Life*, March.)

### **Mongolian Rarities**

News of three rare Mongolian mammals was contained in a letter from Dr. Anudarin Dashdorj, of the Zoology Department, Ulan

Bator University, to the Hon. Ivor Montagu (*Proceedings of the Zoological Society of London*, March). The *takh* or Przewalski's wild horse (see KINGFISHER No. 2, p. 3) survives only in the Takhin Share-nuru ("yellow wild horse") mountain chain on the borders of Mongolia and China, where it was last seen by zoologists in 1955, and by local hunters in 1963. The *habtagai* or wild camel still occurs, probably in some hundreds, in the Gobi-Altai and Bayan Khongor provinces in southern Mongolia. The *kulan* or Mongolian wild ass is more numerous still, running into thousands, in all the provinces along the southern border of Mongolia. All three species are now strictly protected.

### **Bear Protects Tigers**

The number of Ussuri or Manchurian tigers in the Maritime Territory of the Soviet Far East has doubled, from 40 to 80, as a result of the ban on hunting imposed ten years ago. The tiger is now completely protected there, though a few licences are issued to take cubs for zoos. With the slow increase of the tigers, the number of wolf packs has diminished.

### **First Catch Your Bear**

A park warden of the Banff National Park in western Canada was called to a house on the outskirts of the town by a lady who said she had a mad bear in her garden. The warden found the bear run-

ning amok with a can of treacle firmly stuck over its nose. When he produced his rifle, which seemed the only way of dealing with the situation, the lady exclaimed, "Oh, you're not going to shoot it, are you? I only meant you to take off the can!" (John Buxton, in the Annual Report of the Norfolk Naturalists' Trust.)

### **Fire and the Caribou**

A recent study of the effects of forest fires on the winter range of the barren-ground caribou in northern Saskatchewan by George W. Scotter of the Canadian Wildlife Service suggests that the frequency of forest fires is one of the most important reasons for the long-term decline in caribou numbers. Caribou prefer to browse in climax forests, which take many years to return after a fire, or in winter on reindeer lichens, which may take 100 years to recover fully. Forest fires are now three times more numerous than a century ago. Regardless of fires in the future, the vast area of fire-destroyed winter range at present is bound to restrict caribou numbers for several decades ahead.

### **Eagle Owls for Sweden**

The Norfolk Wildlife Park has presented a pair of young eagle owls bred in the park to the Swedish authorities to help their scheme to re-establish this magnificent bird in forests where it has been exterminated. The birds left by air in December, and are

now in a large aviary, where it is hoped they will breed. When they do, their progeny will be released into the forest as soon as they are full grown. Though they will continue to be fed at first, experience shows that they will eventually take up a wild existence, and even attract genuinely wild birds back into the area. The parent birds cannot be released, as they would not be able to fend for themselves. This remarkable scheme, started in 1954, has led to the successful recolonisation by eagle owls of three areas in Sweden, the Kilsbergen range in the south, and forests in the provinces of Västergötland and Småland. In the Kilsbergen range twelve eagle owls have been established as wild birds with natural territories, and although two have been shot by farmers in the plains at the foot of the range, the remaining ten are still alive and presumed to be breeding. (*IUCN Bulletin*, March.)

In Norway, on the other hand, as a correspondent recently wrote to *Animals*, about 100 eagle owls are being killed each year, not to mention both golden and sea eagles.

### **Lammergeier Project**

The Natal Branch of the Wild Life Protection and Conservation Society of South Africa has a project in hand to save the last breeding pairs of lammergeiers in Natal, estimated at fewer than 20 pairs, mainly confined to the Drakensberg in and around Basu-

toland. A leaflet will be distributed to all farmers, and it is intended to establish feeding points for the birds. (*Natal Wild Life*, March.)

### **Help for the Monkey-eating Eagle**

The Board of the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums has asked all its members not to buy any monkey-eating eagles. This bird is extremely rare and in great danger, not more than 150 being left. Two years ago the A.A.Z.P.A. made a similar request to all reputable zoos in relation to the orang-utan.

### **Warden for the Condors**

The National Audubon Society has appointed John C. Borneman as Audubon Condor Warden. His job will be to patrol the mountains and valleys of California where the rare California condor, now only 40 strong (see *KINGFISHER* No. 1, p. 4), still survives. He will assist U.S. Forest Service personnel and State game wardens in encouraging observance of the laws protecting the condor, whose main enemies are gun-happy "sportsmen." For the guidance of people who do not know a hawk from a handsaw, the N.A.S. has just issued a small leaflet on condor identification, with the slogan "Don't shoot any large dark bird."

### **£10,000 for World Wildlife Fund**

Brooke Bonds give the World Wildlife Fund £1 for every thousand labels from one of their

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tea packets that are sent in by schools and youth clubs. So far children have raised more than £10,000 for the Fund in this way, representing ten million labels. One East London school collected 51,500 labels in a year.

### **Wanted: an Emblem**

Sussex Naturalists Trust wants an emblem, and has arranged a competition, with a prize of three guineas, among students in the county. Particulars are being distributed by the Education Officers in Sussex. Most county naturalists' trusts already have emblems, such as the badger (Berks, Bucks and Oxon), the heron for Lincolnshire and the early spider orchid for Dorset.

### **Starling Roost Inquiry**

A. E. J. Symonds, 7 Park Drive, Felpham, Bognor Regis, Sussex, appeals for records, both past and present, of the location of rural communal roosts of starlings on the scale of the 1 km. squares of the National Grid.

### **Work for Young Bird Watchers**

Members of the newly formed Young Ornithologists' Club of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds are carrying out two surveys this spring. They have been noting the dates of the arrival of the first cuckoos all over the country, and are getting up early to record the dawn chorus.

### **New Nature Reserves**

The Nature Conservancy announces that it is to purchase 1,216 acres of Ainsdale and Freshfield dunes in Lancashire, and is negotiating for the marshes and dunes of the Holkham estate in North Norfolk.

County trusts have announced the following new reserves: Bedford Purlieus in Northants, a forest nature reserve in conjunction with the Forestry Commission; Chinnor Hill, Oxon, an important stretch of chalk grassland and juniper and other scrub on the Chiltern escarpment; part of the Buckingham branch of the Grand Union Canal in Northants, to be purchased from British Waterways; and Saddlescombe chalk pit in Sussex, with a fine colony of juniper, to be rented by the Sussex Trust from Brighton Corporation.

### **Quotation of the Month**

"For centuries Americans have drawn strength and inspiration from the beauty of our country. It would be a neglectful generation indeed, indifferent alike to the judgment of history and the command of principle, which failed to preserve and extend such a heritage for its descendants."—President Johnson to Congress.

### **Brief Book Reviews**

**FOREST REFRESHED:** the autobiographical notes of a biologist, by Norman E. Hickin (Hutchinson, 25s.), is the success story of an

entomologist, attractively illustrated by his own drawings.

**HAWK-MOTHS OF GREAT BRITAIN AND EUROPE**, by L. Hugh Newman (Cassell, 50s.), describes all these splendid insects and their life-history, and illustrates them all both in colour and black-and-white. British readers will be especially glad to make the acquaintance of the oak hawk and four other species which have never been recorded this side of the Channel.

**BIRDS OF PREY OF THE WORLD**, by Mary Louise Grossman and John Hamlet (Cassell, 6 gns.), is a superb production, with many breath-taking photographs by Shelly Grossman. The text is in two parts, a general part on biology, ecology and conservation, and a systematic part where all the world's hawks, falcons, eagles, buzzards, vultures and owls are described in some detail, with thumbnail distribution maps.

**SEVEN YEARS WITH FILM AND TV CAMERAS AT THE LONDON ZOO** (London Zoo, Regent's Park, N.W.1, 2s. 6d.) is the story of the Granada TV/Zoological Society Film Unit which recently closed down.

### Conference Reports

**Project MAR:** the conservation and management of temperate marshes, bogs and other wetlands (I.U.C.N., 19 Belgrave Square, London, S.W.1; 35s.); held at Les Saintes - Maries - de - la - Mer, France, November 12-16, 1962.

Working Conference on Birds

of Prey and Owls, Caen, France, April 10-12, 1964 (I.C.B.P., c/o Bird Room, Natural History Museum, London, S.W.7; 17s. 6d.). Surveys the status and conservation of the predatory birds of Europe.

### Coming Events

The VIIth Congress of the International Union of Game Biologists will start in Belgrade, Yugoslavia, on September 5, and finish at Ljubljana on the 11th. Details from C. L. Coles, Eley Game Advisory Service, Fordingbridge, Hants.

The Wildfowl Trust announces that Borough Fen Duck Decoy, near its Peakirk collection in Northamptonshire, will be open to visitors again on May 22 and 23, from 2 to 6 p.m.

### Personalia

At the March meeting of the British Section of the International Council for Bird Preservation Miss Phyllis Barclay-Smith, the Section's Secretary for 30 years, was presented with a painting of a secretary bird from past and present members and friends of the Section in recognition of her outstanding services to conservation.

On April 29 Lord Hurcomb, President of the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds, was presented with the Silver Medal of the Zoological Society of London in recognition of his services to the conservation movement.

Ian Macphail has succeeded

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R. W. Hobson as Director-General of the British National Appeal of the World Wildlife Fund. Peter Long has become the B.N.A.'s Director of Publicity, and P. Craddock Randell succeeds him as Director of the Regional Organisation.

Dr. A. Starker Leopold, the eminent conservationist and Professor of Wildlife Management at the University of California, Berkeley, was presented with the Leopold Medal of the Wildlife Society at the banquet of the North American Wildlife Conference in Washington, D.C., in March. The medal was named for his father, the famous Aldo Leopold.

Ed Graham, the well-known conservationist, who recently retired from the U.S. Department of Agriculture, is now a private consultant, and will advise the Conservation Foundation of New York on projects and policies.

Dr. Stanley A. Cain, who has been Professor of Conservation and Chairman of the School of Natural Resources of the University of Michigan for the past eleven years, has been appointed Assistant U.S. Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife.

Dr. Gwynne Vevers, Curator of the Aquarium at the London Zoo, has been awarded the first Fantham Memorial Research Fellowship to enable him to take part in the Royal Society's 1965 expedition to the Solomon Islands.

The following new Regional Representatives have been ap-

pointed by the British Trust for Ornithology: Anglesey, A. J. Mercer succeeding T. G. Walker; Flintshire, E. P. Stokes succeeding J. M. Harrop, who remains R.R. for Denbighshire; Norfolk, D. V. Butt succeeding M. J. Seago; Peebles, Selkirk, Roxburgh and Berwick, Dr. J. I. Meikle, succeeding Col. W. M. Logan Hume; Ross-shire, Dr. D. H. Mills will act as R.R. for the whole county following the death of Dr. Tom Longstaff.

J. C. Harrison, who has painted the Christmas cards for the Norfolk Naturalists' Trust since 1930, has been made an Honorary Life Member of the Trust in recognition of his generous services.

S. Brock has been appointed full-time Executive Officer of the Kent Naturalists' Trust, with Mrs Brock as Hon. Press Officer.

W. L. Bunday has been appointed full-time General Organiser of the North West Essex and East Herts Preservation Association, which is dedicated to resisting the siting of the third London airport at Stansted, Essex.

### Obituary

Lt.-Col. Niall Rankin, who died in Bechuanaland on April 7, aged 60, was one of the leading bird photographers of his day. From 1929 to 1931 he was a staff photographer for the *Field*, and in 1947 he published *Haunts of British Divers*. He lived on the Isle of Mull.



### Who's Who in Conservation—3

The launching of its Supporters' Club on May 10 makes this an especially appropriate moment to review the contribution of the **WORLD WILDLIFE FUND**, and especially of its British National Appeal, to the conservation movement.

The Fund itself is an international body, with a board of trustees chaired by Prince Bernhard of the Netherlands and a headquarters in Switzerland, actually in the same building at Morges, on the Lake of Geneva, as the International Union for Conservation of Nature. It operates, however, mainly through national appeals, which have at present been established in the United States, Switzerland, Germany and the Netherlands, as well as in the United Kingdom.

Since the main inspiration of the World Wildlife Fund came from Britain, it is not surprising that the British National Appeal was the first to get under way in 1961. A shock issue of the *Daily Mirror* gave it a splendid send off, and it soon made its own niche as an essential but hitherto missing element in the British conservation movement, a body devoted specifically to fund-raising. To guide it in the allocation of the funds raised it has two specialist bodies, the Council for Nature on the home front, and the Fauna Preservation Society for overseas projects.

The national appeals of WWF send one-third of all the general funds they raise to the international body at Morges, and retain another third for use at home, the middle third being available for use either at home or abroad, according to current needs.

Among the most notable achievements of the Fund have been to purchase the Coto Doñana in southern Spain, the finest nature reserve in Europe, to help with the translocation of white rhinos to the Murchison Falls National Park in Uganda and to support the Fauna Preservation Society's Operation Oryx. The last-named resulted in the setting up of the World Herd of Arabian Oryx at Phoenix, Arizona, where the W.W.F. today owns five animals, four presented by the Saudi Arabian Royal Family and the fifth a calf born to one of them since its arrival. The Fund also grant-aids several important international organisations. The B.N.A. has contributed towards the establishment of many nature reserves by county naturalists' trusts.

The President of the British National Appeal is H.R.H. the Duke of Edinburgh, with Peter Scott as Chairman and Ian Macphail as Director-General.

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