

News in Brief

Boat for Rhino Reserve in Malaya

A grant of US \$500 from the FPS/WWF Revolving Fund for the Sungei Dusun rhino reserve in Malaysia has enabled the Game Department to install an out-board engine in the boat being built for the use of the rangers policing the reserve. This was one of David Strickland's recommendations in his report on the Sumatran rhino discussed in the last issue of ORYX. There is a family of three rhino – two adults and one young – in the reserve, and the State Game Warden intends now to keep game rangers there permanently.

Antarctic Whaling Quota Stands

The Antarctic whaling quota agreed at the June meeting of the International Whaling Commission, reported in the last ORYX, has been allowed to stand at the agreed reduced figure of 3,200 blue whale units, and the three nations involved, Japan, Norway and Russia, have now agreed their shares on the same basis as last year.

Pesticide Restrictions Should Stay

Restrictions on the use of persistent pesticides should not be relaxed, says the latest report of the joint committee of the British Trust for Ornithology and the Royal Society for the Protection of Birds. There is still widespread contamination of the environment and no obvious reduction in its extent. The RSPB has begun an intensive study into the spread and accumulation of pesticides in one orchard in Kent.

Released Orang Utan Mates in the Wild

Last spring one of the orang utans cared for by Mrs. Barbara Harrisson in Sarawak, as part of her experiment to return orphaned orang utans to the wild, gave birth to a baby of which the father was completely wild. The animal had been living a semi-wild existence in the Sepilok Forest Reserve in Sabah, where it had been released. Mrs. Harrisson described the early stages of the experiment in ORYX, vol. 7, page 108.

New Bird Law in Italy

The Italian Parliament has passed a law prohibiting from 1969 the catching and shooting in spring of small birds. This is the result of years of campaigning on the part of the ICBP (International Council for Bird Preservation), and a special triumph for Professor Ghigi, the redoubtable chairman of the Italian section of ICBP, now in his ninety-third year.

Wildlife Journal to go to Schools

The FPS has made a grant of £85 to enable the Wild Life Preservation Society of India to send copies of its journal *Cheetal* to 300 English-medium secondary schools in India.

Proposals for a Seal Bill

The FPS and the Council for Nature have collaborated in drawing up proposals for a parliamentary bill to conserve both grey and common seals in Great Britain with the objects of managing the stocks as a valuable natural resource and preventing cruel methods of killing. The agreed proposals include a prohibition on the killing of all seals except under licence but with safeguards against seals damaging nets, etc.; licences to be given only for fishery protection,

scientific research and commercial purposes, and specifying numbers, age and sex of the animals that may be taken together with dates and place of killing; the prohibition of shotguns and captive bolt humane killers and all poisons, and on the sale or export of sealskins unless accompanied by the licence.

Ivory-billed Woodpeckers Found

America's largest woodpecker, the ivory-billed, thought to be extinct, has been rediscovered in eastern Texas by an ornithologist working for the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, who found several pairs in the Neches River valley. The Bureau's plans for protecting it include agreements with timber owners to protect trees needed by the birds, plus "the best protection of all" – an alerted public.

European Bison Increase

The numbers of pure-bred European bison, the wisent, in the wild had increased in 1966 to 860. Ten years before the number was 281; at the end of the war, in 1945, there were only 86. The largest number are in the Bialowieza Forest in Poland.

Japan Acts on Orang Utans and Eagles

The importation of orang utans and monkey-eating eagles into Japan has been forbidden unless accompanied by an export certificate from the country of origin.

Facts About African Primates

Because of the dangerous decline in the numbers of many African primates, IUCN is asking all African countries to collect facts on the current status, distribution and population trends of all primate species and sub-species in their territories, together with the numbers exported.

Away From It All

"The damp night air, heavy with a pall of eyewatering smoke, is cut by the blare of transistor radios, the clatter of pots and pans, the roar of a motorcycle, and the squeals of teenagers. Except for hundreds of shiny aluminium trailers and multicoloured tents squeezed into camping areas, this might be any city after dark." It was in fact in the Yosemite National Park in the USA, where in 1966 nearly all the park's 1·7 million visitors crammed themselves into Yosemite Valley, an area of eight square miles.

Turtle Hatcheries in Malaysia

The report for 1965 from the green and leathery turtle hatcheries in Malaysia shows a considerable increase in the numbers of young turtles released compared with the previous year. For green turtles the figure is 4,558 hatched at the Semerak hatchery, in Kelantan, and released, a hatching of 54·6 per cent if sterile clutches (of which there are always some) are excluded; in 1964 the comparable figures were 1,971 and 53·6 per cent. The leathery turtle hatch at Rantau Abang, Trengganu, was even more successful. The total of 7,199 young represented a 74 per cent hatch (compared with 3,803 and 34 per cent in 1964). The conservation programme is organised and carried out by the Department of Fisheries, Kuala Trengganu, and a report by Dr. E. Balasingam is published in the *Malayan Nature Journal*. A tagging programme is also being carried out which it is hoped will give some clues to the important question of how many of the young turtles survive and return to breed.