

Briefly ...

International

Pesticide use still growing

The annual rate of growth in pesticide use is now about 10 per cent compared with 5 per cent between 1972 and 1980. As pesticide use increases, so does resistance to pesticides. The Food and Agriculture Organization reports that 392 species of arthropods have become resistant to pesticides, 50 species of plant pathogens have been reported resistant to fungicides and bactericides, and five weed species are resistant to herbicides. The World Health Organization has also reported an increased resistance of mosquitoes to insecticides.

Environment Newsletter, 6.

Desert spread means policy must shift

Every year 60,000 sq km (23,000 sq miles) of land become desert, and only three countries, Tanzania, Burundi and Uruguay, have written national plans to reverse the spread of desert according to the United Nations Environmental Programme (UNEP). At a UNEP meeting on desertification 10 years ago, 94 nations promised to do something about the problem, but international aid has been inappropriate and inadequate. Now UNEP may shift from a global approach to regional strategies.

New Scientist, 26 February 1987.

95 for CITES

The Dominican Republic has become the 95th Party to CITES. Its ratification of the convention came into effect on 17 March 1987.

Traffic (USA), 7, 2 and 3.

UAE leaves CITES

The United Arab Emirates has decided to withdraw from CITES, effective from the end of January 1988, the first member to leave the Convention since its inception 12 years ago. The UAE has served as a major loophole for rhino horn, African ivory and Indian reptile skins, and has shown little interest in implementing the convention. In November 1985 the CITES Secretariat recommended that all CITES members discontinue all CITES trade with the UAE because of the large volume of

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illegal ivory that was passing through the country.

WWF News, 46.

Senegal joins convention

Senegal is the first African state to accede to the Bern Convention on the Conservation of European Wildlife and Natural Habitats. When its accession becomes effective on 1 August it will have to take measures to safeguard the migratory birds that leave Europe to winter in Senegal. Senegal will also participate in efforts to protect the Mediterranean monk seal *Monachus monachus*, which has been seen off its coast in the past.

Council of Europe, 15 April 1987.

Gabon joins World Heritage

Gabon has joined the World Heritage Convention, bringing the total number of State Parties to 92.

CNPPA Members' Newsletter, 38.

US joins Ramsar

The US joined the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention) on 18 April. Four US wetlands have been designated under the agreement: Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) in Nevada, the 'Brigatine' and 'Barnegat' units of the Edwin B. Forsythe NWR in New Jersey, Izembek NWR and State Game Range in Alaska, and Okefenokee NWR in Georgia and Florida.

Department of the Interior News Release, 2 March 1987.

Ghana joins two conventions

Ghana has joined the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance Especially as Waterfowl Habitat (Ramsar Convention) and the Convention on the Conservation of Migratory Species of Wild Animals (Bonn Convention).

World Birdwatch, 9, 1.

New committee for chimpanzees

At the first international symposium devoted to non-invasive research on chimpanzees, which was sponsored by

the Chicago Academy of Sciences on 7–11 November 1986, a resolution was passed to form the Committee for Conservation and Care of Chimpanzees (CCCC). The main goals are to ensure the long-term preservation of wild chimpanzees in Africa and to improve conditions for captive chimpanzees, particularly in biomedical and pharmaceutical laboratories. Four initial projects have been launched including the preparation of a field research plan defining critical areas for wild populations and a report on international trade in these animals.

Dr Geza Teleki, Chairman, CCCC, 3819 48th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20016, USA.

Europe and North Africa

Protection for otters

The European otter *Lutra lutra* has been given full protection in Bulgaria, even at fish farms where animals were previously killed. In Denmark, Project Otter supplies all interested fishermen with a free grid to use in their fyke nets to prevent otters entering them and drowning. The Ministry of Fisheries now orders that all fishermen in one of Denmark's best otter areas, River Hvidbjerg, must use such a grid in fish-traps, and the Ministry of Environment has declared the whole watershed as protected for otter conservation. In Valencia, Spain, a recent survey revealed that the otter was the most endangered mammal in the region; as a result the fine for killing an otter has been raised from \$150 to \$3000, the Wildlife Service plans to improve bank vegetation and the Water Authority is considering how it can help with otter conservation.

IUCN Otter Specialist Group Bulletin, 2.

New society for cetaceans

The European Cetacean Society was formed in January 1987 when 80 European cetologists met in Denmark. Its aims are to promote and co-ordinate the scientific study and conservation of all cetaceans in European waters and to disseminate information about them to members, governments and the public. Six international working groups have been set up to co-ordinate research in

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various areas. Membership is open to anyone, and details are available from Dr Peter Evans, Zoology Department, University of Oxford, South Parks Road, Oxford OX1 3PS, UK.

Sweden's Arctic foxes too few

Although protected since 1929, the Arctic fox *Alopex lagopus* population is now a mere 200. A protection programme is about to be implemented and a study using radio telemetry is planned to gather more information on this threatened predator.

naturpoa newsletter-nature, 86–12.

Otter project progress

The Otter Trust, based in Suffolk, UK, has made four successful reintroductions of captive-bred otters *Lutra lutra* in East Anglia since 1983. A conservative estimate suggests that the released otters have reared 8–12 cubs in the wild since 1984, and the cubs and their parents must now form a significant proportion of the wild otter population in East Anglia.

The Otter Trust, Progress Report, 10.

New UK reserves

Britain's Nature Conservancy Council announced two new national nature reserves in February 1987: Rhos Goch and Cors y Llyn, both in Powys, Wales, bringing the total number to 224. Cors y Llyn (61 acres, 25 ha) is mire and species-rich pasture, and Rhos Goch (111 acres, 45 ha) lies in a river valley containing several types of mires and damp woodlands.

NCC Press Release, 27 February 1987.

Gorilla import allowed despite objections

The UK's Minister of State decided to allow Howlett's Zoo to import three wild-caught western lowland gorillas *Gorilla g. gorilla* from the People's Republic of the Congo against advice from CITES and conservation organizations, who say that permitting such imports stimulates trade. In July 1986 the American Association of Zoological Parks and Aquariums made an offer that involved incorporating the gorillas, which would remain the property of the Congo Government, into US zoos as

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part of a species survival plan. The proposal also included funding surveys of montane forests in the Congo and the training of Congolese conservation personnel. That offer was ignored.

Traffic Bulletin, VIII, 4.

TRAFFIC office in France

TRAFFIC (France) was established on 16 January 1987 in the offices of WWF–France, 14 rue de la Cure, 75016 Paris, under the direction of Mlle Gwenola le Serrec. Its priorities include carrying out a survey of the effective implementation of CITES in France and the analyses of available data, and the compilation of a list of wildlife dealers.

Traffic Bulletin, VIII, 4.

Park for monk seal

Greece has established its first marine park in the Northern Sporades to protect the Mediterranean monk seal *Monachus monachus*. The islands of Piperi, Youra, Kyria Panaghia and Skandzoura have been included in a zone of absolute protection. A buffer zone has also been declared, which includes the east coast of Pilio mountain, Skiatos, Skopelos and Alonissos. Only coastal fishermen will be allowed to fish in the protected zone, except for Piperi, where the Alonissos fishermen have agreed not to fish for three years and then to apply the moratorium to the other islands on a three-year rotation. Three permanent guards will be supported by three seasonal guards in the summer. The monk seal population of the area is estimated to be 40 individuals, and at least three pups were born in 1986.

Greek Ministry of the Environment.

Battle for Daimiel

A dramatic expansion of irrigated agriculture round the Tablas de Daimiel National Park in Spain is threatening to dry up the underground aquifer supplying lagoons and wetlands of international importance to wildfowl. Proposals to dig wells in the park have met with protest from farmers, and the Spanish authorities are failing to take any action to control the irrigation, instead blaming owners of private lagoons to the north-east of the park for the problem. These owners offered to sell their lagoons to the state conservation agency for

management as a national park, but received no response. Park staff believe that unless wells are dug immediately, Daimiel will be destroyed within a year.

BBC Wildlife, April 1987.

Madeiran bird's dire position

The freira *Pterodroma madeira*, which breeds only on Madeira and spends most of the year at sea, could become the second European bird to disappear in historical times. A survey of its breeding sites on Madeira's precipitous mountain slopes in 1986 found only 18 adult birds and no chicks; rats are widespread in the breeding area and are probably the cause of the species's decline.

World Birdwatch, 9, 1.

New Moroccan Association

The Moroccan Association for Environmental Protection has been founded in Rabat, and it wants to establish links with other bodies to share experiences in the field of nature conservation and environmental protection.

ASMAPE, BP 6331, Rabat-Instituts, Morocco.

Africa

Two new reserves in Senegal

Two game reserves, the Gueumbel and Popenguine, have been established in Senegal, bringing the total to three.

CNPPA Members' Newsletter, 38.

West African bird trade wasteful

The bird trade in West Africa is four times larger than had been suspected according to the London-based Environmental Investigation Agency. About 10 million birds are exported annually from Senegal to Europe, the US and Japan, and because more than half the birds die before being exported this means that twice that number are captured. The birds involved are mostly finches and parrots, and about 17 per cent die during transport and quarantine.

EIA, Unit 32, 40 Bowling Green Lane, London EC1R 0NE, UK.

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Destructive guests in the Maasai Mara

A hunting party of Arab princes and sheiks killed 200 animals, including endangered species, in Kenya's Maasai Mara reserve in March 1987. The group, whose members were said to be 'state guests', was accompanied by a professional hunter, a government official and a member of parliament. Hunting has been illegal in Kenya since 1977, although wild bird hunting was allowed again in 1986.

Monitor, 21 March 1987.

Gorillas get help in Uganda

The Impenetrable (Bwindi) Forest Conservation Project in Uganda has been set up by the WWF to protect the 115 mountain gorillas there as well as the 321-sq-km (124-sq-mile) forest. It is being run on similar lines to the Mountain Gorilla Project in Rwanda, and local people are being very co-operative. A field station is being built, two groups of gorillas are being habituated for tourists, and Ugandans are being trained to run the conservation education programme.

Focus, 9, 1.

Mount Oku to be protected

Cameroon's Ministry of Agriculture is on the way to declaring Mount Oku a protected forest area. Half the forest has been destroyed in the past 20 years, and one-third of the remainder is degraded. The forest protects watershed and has a high level of endemism; several species are endangered, including Bannerman's turaco *Tauraco bannermani* and the banded wattle-eye *Platysteira laticincta*. A WWF/ICBP Project Director has drawn up a detailed management plan, which recommends removal of livestock, development of tourism and involvement of the local people.

WWF News, 45.

Plan for Africa's largest park

The management plan for Salonga National Park in Zaire is being revised following a workshop organized by the Institut Zairois pour la Conservation de la Nature. The workshop made 16 recommendations for management of and research in the 3.6-million-ha (13,900-sq-mile) park. The presence of

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the pygmy chimpanzee *Pan paniscus* has recently been confirmed there. *CNPPA Members' Newsletter*, 38.

Wirebird's plight in St Helena

The wirebird *Charadrius santahelenae*, St Helena's only endemic bird, may number only 200 according to Carol Alexander, who has studied the plover's breeding and feeding behaviour. The species has been protected since 1894 and is something of a national symbol, but its breeding sites are being built on and the Government is encouraging St Helena's farmers to increase production by using more pesticides, which could have adverse effects on the birds.

BBC Wildlife, 5, 2.

Oil pollution at Tristan da Cunha

It has been reported recently that a damaged South African fishing boat fished off Inaccessible Island, a nature reserve recommended for the World Heritage List, from 7 November to 11 December 1985, leaking lubricating oil from its stern throughout that period. The oil affected several species of seabirds and also fur seals.

W.R.P. Bourne.

Plans for rare rabbit

The riverine rabbit (Bushman rabbit) *Bunolagus monticularis* may number fewer than 300, making it South Africa's rarest mammal. It is restricted to a declining habitat, riverine scrub in the Karroo Desert, but there are plans to breed it in captivity at the De Wildt Cheetah Research Station for future releases into the wild.

Our Living World, 7.



The Natal barred blue *Spindasis natalensis*, one of 13 stamps depicting butterflies issued by Swaziland in 1987.

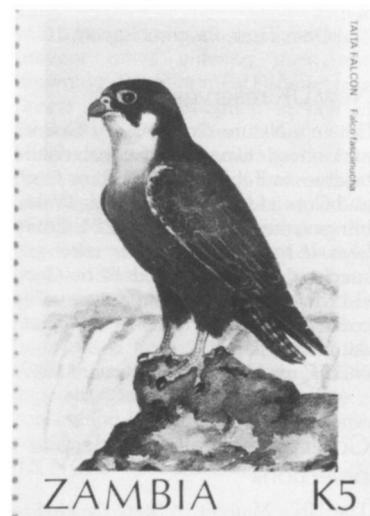
Geometric tortoise gets a safe home

A joint Wildlife Society of South Africa/South African Nature Foundation project resulted in a fenced reserve for the geometric tortoise *Psammobates geometricus* in South Africa. In October it was handed over to the Cape Department of Nature and Environmental Conservation, which will manage it. 'Operation Tortoise' involved large numbers of people, schoolchildren in particular, in fund-raising, and 200 people rescued tortoises from an area scheduled for housing, releasing them into the new reserve. The tortoise reserve protects not only geometric tortoises, of which fewer than 3000 exist in the world, but also an area of coastal renosterveld, which is now one of South Africa's most threatened types of natural vegetation.

Our Living World, 7.

Southern right whale recovery

The population of the southern right whale *Balaena glacialis* in South Africa's



The Taita falcon *Falco fasciinucha*, a rare local resident of the rocky gorges around the Zambesi, one of eight bird stamps issued by Zambia on 16 April 1987.

Further details on both issues from Crown Agents Stamp Company Ltd, Old Inn House, 2 Carshalton Road, Sutton, Surrey SM1 4RN, UK.

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coastal waters appears to be increasing at a rate of 7 per cent a year according to the annual census, which has been carried out since 1969. In 1986 309 right whales, including 51 calves, were counted along the South African coast, and it appears that the species is beginning to recolonize its historical winter range, which may have stretched from southern Angola to southern Mozambique.

African Wildlife, 40, 6.

Conservation by cultivation

The Durban municipality in South Africa has established a nursery to grow plants used in traditional medicine in Natal; many of the species used are threatened by over-collection. Some plants will be sold to herbal practitioners, others may be reintroduced into the wild. A second objective of the project is to teach herbalists how to grow their own plants and how to crop wild plants sustainably.

Our Living World, 7.

Kariba weed stopped in tracks

The Kariba weed *Salvinia molesta*, found in Moreni Wildlife Reserve in the Okavango Delta in June 1986 (see *Oryx*, 21, 52), seems to have been eliminated according to the Aquatic Weed Control Unit of Botswana, but the new boat regulations introduced to stop the plant spreading remain in force.

Kalahari Conservation Society Newsletter, 13.

Serious problems in Mozambique

The guerilla war that has destabilized Mozambique since 1975, combined with a five-year drought, has had serious consequences for wildlife, according to a report by Portuguese naturalist José Lobao Tello, former wildlife officer in the country. Conservation activities have collapsed since 1983, poaching is rampant, fires are uncontrolled and entire ecosystems are being altered by drought, dam-building, over-logging and shifting cultivators. National park facilities have been destroyed and staff have fled; the country's only wildlife training school closed in 1985 for security reasons.

WWF News, 45.

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How many coelocanths can we take?

The coelocanth *Latimeria chalumnae* may be threatened because Japanese experts are increasing fishing efficiency around the Comoro Islands in the Indian Ocean. The fish used to be caught by traditional methods at the rate of two or three a year; now 10 or more a year are hauled up and go to museums and collectors. In 1985 the Comoro Islands Government presented a coelocanth to the United Nations to commemorate the UN's 40th birthday. Data on coelocanths are virtually non-existent, and a project starting in 1987 by the J. L. B. Smith Institute of Ichthyology in South Africa will investigate the coelocanth's status and, if necessary, make recommendations for conservation including protection by CITES.

New Scientist, 5 February 1987; *Our Living World*, 7.

Asia (excluding Indo-Malaya)

Changes in the desert

The evacuation of the bedouin and their livestock from the Negev and Judean deserts in 1977, and the subsequent use of these areas by the Israeli army for training, has caused changes in the raptor populations there. Negev lappet-faced vultures *Torgos tracheliotus negevensis*, griffon vultures *Gyps fulvus*, and possibly also lammergeyers *Gypaetus barbatus*, have declined, probably because their main food—carion of domestic stock—has disappeared. Populations of golden eagle *Aquila chrysaetos* and long-legged buzzard *Buteo rufinus*, however, have increased in the evacuated areas, where their main prey species have been able to increase in the absence of goats, sheep and camels.

Frumkin, R. 1986. The status of breeding raptors in the Israeli deserts, 1980–1985. Sandgrouse, 8, 42–57.

New lizard found in Iran

A new species of gecko, the world's largest, was discovered by an Iranian zoologist serving as a medical orderly in the Gulf war between Iran and Iraq. The lizard is 40 cm long and is now in the Paris Museum of Natural History.

New Scientist, 19 March 1987.

Birds come back to Changdao

Since Changdao Island, Shandong Province, China, in the Bohai Sea was made a bird reserve in 1982, bird killing has ended and the islanders supply food for migrating birds and often rescue sick ones. After four years of work the number of migrating birds using the island has increased, and rare species not seen there for years have returned.

China Daily, 6 December 1986.

A new lagomorph in China

A new species of pika has been described from Tianshan Mountain, Nilka, Xinjiang, China, where type specimens were collected in 1983 and 1985. *Ochotona iliensis* has large rust-red spots on forehead, crown and neck and is large for a pika, being about 200 mm (8 inches) long.

Acta Zoologica Sinica, 32, 4.

Trouble for birds at Dongting

Between 300,000 and 400,000 birds are being killed every year by farmers and hunters around Dongting in Hunan Province, China's second largest freshwater lake, despite a provincial decision to set up a nature reserve there in 1984. Local authorities seem to be ignoring the problem because of the strong local tradition of bird-hunting and because the birds are said to eat fish. The lake is also shrinking because of land reclamation and silting, and a large-scale soil and water conservation programme is being recommended.

China Daily, 15 November 1986.

Magnolia saved

The Baohua magnolia, endemic to Baohua County in East China's Jiangsu Province, has been brought back from the verge of extinction, from 27 plants five years ago to 15,000 today. It is the only species in the Magnolia family protected by the Government.

China Daily, 1 September 1986.

China's nature protection programme

China has approved its first systematic plan to protect its environment and

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natural resources. Entitled 'China's Nature Protection Programme', it was developed by more than 200 specialists from governmental organizations and 13 national academic societies over the last three years.

China Daily, 24 December 1986.

Sturgeon release

Scientists have released 340,000 captive-reared Chinese sturgeon into the Yangtze River since the beginning of 1986. Before the Gezhouba Dam was built in 1982, the fish migrated from their spawning grounds in the Jinsha River near the upper reaches of the Yangtze to the Pacific and back again.

China Daily, 6 January 1987.

Panda's back against the wall

Immediate steps are needed to prevent giant pandas *Ailuropoda melanoleuca*

becoming extinct in the wild, according to the results of an analysis by WWF Consultant Dr John Mackinnon and the Chinese Ministry of Forestry. The first priority is to create corridors of new habitat to link isolated small populations. In the longer term it is necessary to improve the management of the network of 12 panda reserves, to amend legislation and to reintroduce captive-bred pandas in the wild. Since the first survey in the mid-1970s, the panda population in China has decreased by 150–200 and now numbers fewer than 1000 individuals.

WWF News, 46.

Japanese coral foundation

In order to save the country's remaining coral, the Nature Conservation Society of Japan, together with other conservationists, has established a coral foundation, Nirai-Kanai-Yu Foundation. It

has four objectives: to study and preserve coral reefs and shores; to protect sea-turtle breeding grounds and mangrove forests; to purchase land along seashores; and to carry out conservation education.

Nature Conservation Society of Japan, 105 Tokyo-to, Minato-ku, Toranomon 2-8-1, Toranomon Denki Building, 4th Floor, Tokyo, Japan.

No chopsticks, thanks!

A campaign against the use of disposable wooden chopsticks, started 20 years ago by a group of housewives in northern Hokkaido, is spreading amongst consumer and conservation groups in Japan. The chopsticks are provided automatically with all meals in canteens, cafeterias and restaurants, and the campaign advocates refusing these, using instead one's own personal, non-disposable set. Although disposable chopsticks account for only 0.2 per cent of wood consumption in Japan, the campaign is seen as a way of increasing awareness of Japan's contribution to the destruction of tropical forests in Asia.

APPEN, 4, 2 (*Sahabat Alam Malaysia, 37 Lorong Birch, Penang 10250, Malaysia*).

Taiwan, a growing entrepot for wildlife trade

Taiwan is increasingly becoming an entrepot for illegal wildlife as Singapore, Hong Kong and Japan begin to comply with CITES regulations. In early 1987 three or four lowland gorillas, banned in trade by CITES, were shipped to Taiwan from Cameroon and three died on the way. Cameroon, a CITES Party, has violated CITES repeatedly by supplying the illegal gorilla trade. The International Primate Protection League has called upon the US Government to impose sanctions against Taiwan in an attempt to force it to adopt regulations and documentation in compliance with CITES.

Monitor, 9 February 1987.

Indo-Malaya

Project Snow Leopard

India announced the start of Project Snow Leopard at the Fifth International Snow Leopard Symposium in Srinagar,

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Cartoon from *Asian-Pacific Environment*, 4, 2, published by Sahabat Alam Malaysia, 37 Lorong Birch, Penang 10250, Malaysia (2-year subscription — 8 issues — US\$24.00 airmail or US\$20.00 surface mail).

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India, which was held in October 1986. While generally along the lines of India's Project Tiger, the new project will focus on establishing multi-use reserves where local people will not only keep their traditional land rights, but will be actively involved in the conservation of the snow leopard.
Snow Line, 11.

Market monitoring

Concerned about the illegal trade in wildlife that goes on openly at markets despite periodic crackdowns, the Bangkok Bird Club, in co-operation with Thailand's Wildlife Conservation Division, is launching a survey of the markets to record the species and numbers on sale. The information will be published in an attempt to raise public awareness of the scale of this destructive trade.
Bangkok Bird Club Bulletin, 4, 3.

Malaysian island becomes free port

The rich wildlife of the island of Pulau Langkawi, near the northern tip of West Malaysia, is already being destroyed by illegal hunters. A new threat looms, however. On 1 January the island was granted free-port status, and by mid-1987 a new extension of the airport will be complete. Both events will attract more tourists—60,000 are expected in 1987 and 1.4 million by 2000—and it is feared the scale of hunting to supply the tourist trade will increase. Sahabat Alam Malaysia has urged the Wildlife Department to take action against the hunters and to freeze hunting licences (at present issued for mouse deer and wild boar).

Sahabat Alam Malaysia (Friends of the Earth Malaysia), 37 Lorong Birch, Penang 10250, Malaysia.

North America

Gas and oil leases on wildlife refuge

The US Fish and Wildlife Service has recommended that the coastal plain of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska be made available for oil and gas leasing. The coastal plain covers 1.5 million acres (0.6 million ha) of the refuge's 19 million acres (7.7 million

ha), but provides calving grounds for a large caribou herd and habitat for other wildlife including musk oxen, polar and brown bears, and many species of migratory birds. The Service believes that development of the refuge could occur with only minimal adverse environmental effects.

Marine Pollution Bulletin, 18, 2.

Ranchers help lady's slipper

One of only six known sites in Canada where the small white lady's slipper orchid grows has been protected by an agreement between Manitoba Naturalists Society (MNS) and S and S Ranchers. The site, near Lake Francis, had been prairie until 1984 and was cut only occasionally for hay, but then the land was purchased for cattle pasture. When S and S learned that the orchids were in danger it gave complete control of 150 ha (370 acres) to the MNS, which intends to fence the area and burn it every 7–10 years to control encroachment of aspen. The lady's slipper is fire-adapted.

Nature Canada, 16, 2.

Where wildflowers are banned

In Manitoba, Canada, more than 500 species of plant are listed as noxious weeds and at least half of these are native plants. It means that if a Manitoba resident grew a wildflower meadow in the back-garden, complaining neighbours could have the 'weed patch' destroyed legally.

Wildflower, 3, 1.

Trying to save Khutzeymateen

The Friends of Ecological Reserves in British Columbia, Canada, are campaigning to save Khutzeymateen Valley from logging. The British Columbian Government has accepted the advice of a Wilderness Advisory Committee that, while there is little information about the valley's wildlife, the Khutzeymateen should be logged. The campaigners are commissioning a survey of the valley, have obtained an economic analysis of the logging proposal, and are now investigating the economic benefits that a grizzly sanctuary would bring. The valley contains ancient Sitka spruce forests, salmon rivers and an undisturbed tidal estuary, as well as 20–50 grizzly bears *Ursus arctos*, 40–50 per

cent of the State's population. To date no grizzly habitat in British Columbia has been protected.

Friends of Ecological Reserves, PO Box 1721, Stn. E Victoria, BC, V8W 2Y1 Canada.

Help for purple martins

A conservation association has been formed to help co-ordinate research and management efforts for the purple martin *Progne subis*, whose populations are declining in many parts of its breeding range. The bird has been managed by man longer than any other North American species; American Indians enticed birds to nest in their villages by attaching hollow gourds to wigwam poles, and modern martin houses are built for entire colonies.

Purple Martin Conservation Association, PO Box 178, Edinboro, PA 16412, USA.

A turtle and a thistle

In December 1986 the Loch Lomond coyote thistle *Eryngium constancei* and the ringed sawback turtle *Graptemys oculifera* were added to the US list of Endangered and Threatened species. The thistle survives only on the bed of a seasonal wetland in California, where it is threatened by potential dredging and filling. The turtle is found only in the Pearl River system of Mississippi and Louisiana, where its habitat has been modified by reservoir construction and flood control projects.

Endangered Species Technical Bulletin, XII, 1.

A crayfish, a fish and five plants

During September and October 1986 the following species were added to the US List of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife: the Nashville crayfish *Orconectes shoupi*, threatened by pollution in its last watershed, the Mill Creek drainage in Tennessee; the loach minnow *Tiaroga cobitis*, which is threatened by the spread of exotic predatory and competing species and whose fragmented habitat in the Gila River system is being degraded by man's activities; the ko'oloa'ula *Abutilon menziesii*, a shrub that has been reduced to three populations on Lana'i, Maui, and O'ahu in the Hawaiian Islands and which is

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threatened by erosion, fire, floods, over-grazing by feral livestock and defoliation by the introduced Chinese rose beetle *Adoretus sinicus*; the Alabama leather flower *Clematis socialis*, known from only two sites in Alabama where it is threatened by roadway maintenance activities; and three Florida shrubs, the beautiful pawpaw *Deeringothamnus pulchellus*, Rugel's pawpaw *D. rugelii* and four-petal pawpaw *Asimina tetramera*, all threatened by urbanization.

Endangered Species Technical Bulletin, XI, 10 and 11.

US lists 10 plants and a kangaroo rat

In January the US Fish and Wildlife Service added seven endemic plants of the sandpine/evergreen oak scrub ecosystem on the central Florida sand ridge, all imperilled by conversion of habitat to citrus groves and residential developments, to the list of Endangered and Threatened species. The Service also listed the Missouri bladderpod *Lesquerella filiformis*, endemic to the prairie of south-western Missouri, the prairie bush clover *Lespedeza leprostachya*, endemic to the mid-western US, the Santa Cruz cypress *Cupressus abramsiana*, restricted to five groves in California, and the giant kangaroo rat *Dipodomys ingens* of south-central California.

Endangered Species Technical Bulletin, XII, 2.

Ski-run harming trout

The 56-acre (23-ha) Hidden Valley ski complex is out of place in the heart of Rocky Mountain National Park, Colorado, according to an environmental assessment completed by the US National Parks Service, and it may be harmful to the endangered green-back cutthroat trout *Salmo clarki stormias*, which inhabit the Hidden Valley Creek and the beaver ponds below the ski-runs. Water is diverted for snowmaking in early winter, and there has been no detailed research on the amount of water flow needed to maintain a healthy trout population. The ski-runs and slope also cause sediment build-up in the creek. The National Park and Conservation Association would like the site returned to its natural state,

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but the Parks Service says that the skiing should continue until an alternative site is found, which is unlikely to be within the next 10–15 years.

National Parks, 61, 1–2.

Caribou reintroduction

The Maine Caribou Reintroduction Project has succeeded in bringing a herd of caribou *Rangifer tarandus* from Newfoundland to the University of Maine in Orono. Five caribou died, probably due to stress from capture and a difficult journey, but 20 females and two males are now settled into a 5-acre (2-ha) wooded enclosure. They will be kept in captivity for breeding for five or six years before being released into the wild as a self-sustaining herd. Caribou disappeared from Maine 80 years ago due to over-hunting.

The New York Times, 8 February 1987.

Mystery wildlife deaths in Nevada

More than seven million fish and 1500 birds died in January and February in Carson Sink, a 600-sq-km (230-sq-mile) area in Stillwater Wildlife Management Area in Nevada. Some of the birds are known to have died from avian cholera, and there were fears for 200,000 migrants due at the refuge in March. A combination of cold weather, rising salinity and natural and man-made toxins were suspected as contributory factors, but laboratory reports on other causes of death are still awaited.

New Scientist, 5 March 1987; *The Globe and Mail*, 20 February 1987.

USA's 49th park

On 27 October 1986 the USA established a 76,000-acre (31,000-ha) area of Nevada's Humboldt National Forest as Great Basin National Park, the nation's 49th.

National Parks, 61, 1–2.

Californian condor extinct in the wild

The last wild Californian condor *Gymnogyps californianus* was captured on 19 April to join 26 others of the species held for captive breeding in San

Diego Wild Animal Park and Los Angeles Zoo. No Californian condors have yet bred in captivity, but San Diego Zoo reported that one pair exhibited courtship behaviour recently. *Department of the Interior News Release*, 21 April 1987.

Kesterton clean-up order

The Californian Water Resources Control Board has ordered the US Bureau of Reclamation immediately to clean up Kesterton Reservoir in Kesterton National Wildlife Refuge by removing selenium-contaminated soil and vegetation and placing it in a sealed toxic dump. The Bureau must also provide alternative wetland areas for wildlife. The Refuge is home to several threatened species and is a stopping place for migratory birds. The water supply to Kesterton drains from farmland and was originally intended to be run into San Francisco Bay, but the drainage canal planned 20 years ago was never completed and stopped at Kesterton where pollutants built up as water evaporated. The man-made wetland was declared a wildlife refuge in 1972, but within a decade high levels of selenium were found in fish, numbers of dead and deformed birds were found, and in 1985 the State Water Board ordered the Kesterton reservoir to be closed.

Los Angeles Times, 20 March 1987.

Thick-billed parrot release

Five captive-bred thick-billed parrots *Rhynchopsitta pachyrhyncha* from Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust were flown to the USA by British Airways under its Assisting Nature Conservation Programme on 11 February 1987. The birds will be released in pine forests in Arizona as part of a reintroduction project by the US Fish and Wildlife Service, Arizona Game and Fish Department, the US Forest Service and the San Diego Zoo, which has already conducted successful pilot releases of confiscated, wild-caught parrots. The species, listed as vulnerable by the IUCN, now occurs in the wild only in North and Central Mexico, although its former range extended to Arizona and New Mexico in the USA.

Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust, 10 February 1987; *Endangered Species Technical Bulletin*, XII, 1.

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Central America

Guatemalan nature foundation established

Defensores de la Naturaleza (Defenders of Nature), which was founded in Guatemala in 1983, became a legally established foundation in 1986. With support from private corporations and volunteers, it publishes educational materials to promote conservation of natural resources and its office in Guatemala City functions as a conservation centre. It has established a cloud forest reserve to protect the resplendent quetzal *Pharomachrus mocinno*, and is seeking to develop a series of forest reserves throughout the country. It also plans to teach farmers how to replace slash-and-burn techniques with sustainable cultivation.

Defensores de la Naturaleza, 7 Ave-13 Calle Z.9, ed. La Cupula, Guatemala.

Jaguar's gift to jaguars

The Cockscomb Basin Jaguar Reserve in Belize, which was established in late 1984 as a sanctuary for the jaguar *Panthera onca*, has received a financial gift from Jaguar Cars Inc., which will assist the World Wildlife Fund in long-range reserve planning and management and in providing training in wildlife management for the reserve staff.

World Wildlife Fund News Release, 15 April 1987.

Logging threatens proposed biosphere reserve

Nicaragua's Association of Biologists and Ecologists is protesting over Nicaragua's State Forestry Corporation granting a timber concession to a private Costa Rican logging company. The concession covers 3200 sq km (1200 sq miles) of virgin tropical rain forest in the San Juan River watershed—an area the Nicaraguan Environmental Agency has proposed to designate as an international biosphere reserve, or peace park, in co-operation with Costa Rica. Destruction of the forest would cause erosion, sedimentation and flooding of the lowlands. Proponents of the concession say it is necessary because of Nicaragua's economic crisis brought about by a US Government embargo and the Contra war, but opponents say it is ecologically unsound and will bring no long-term benefits to Nicaragua

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The front cover of a booklet published by the Guatemalan Defenders of Nature pictures the resplendent quetzal in an Aguacatillo tree.

since the wood will be processed in Costa Rica.

The Environmental Project on Central America, Earth Island Institute, 300 Broadway, Suite 28, San Francisco CA 94133, USA.

Haiti bans wild animal exports

Haiti, one of the most active wildlife trading countries in the Caribbean, is not a member of CITES and has no domestic wildlife trade legislation. On 1 July 1986, however, the Haitian Ministry of Agriculture, Natural Resources and Rural Development stated that 'it is prohibited to capture, sell and export animals such as 'Polly's' or parrots, parakeets, anoles, mabouyas, spiders, snakes, toads, in particular, and all other species of Haitian wild fauna in general'.

Traffic (USA), 7, 2 and 3.

Puerto Rican shrubs endangered

Two Puerto Rican plants, both evergreen shrubs, have been listed by the

US Fish and Wildlife Service as Endangered: *Peperomia wheeleri* is threatened by feral livestock on Culebra Island, and *Banara vanderbiltii* survives as six individuals in the karst region of Puerto Rico.

Endangered Species Technical Bulletin, XII, 2.

Turtle beds versus tourist beds

In St Croix, Virgin Islands, residents and environmental groups are battling to save Salt River Bay. A developer has applied for permission to build a 300-unit condominium, a 288-room hotel and a 157-slip marina. This proposed tourist complex would lie within a bay that includes a US national landmark, a proposed national marine sanctuary and a Nature Conservancy Sanctuary. Dredging to build the marina would destroy seagrass and algal beds that are breeding grounds for the hawksbill and green turtles, *Eretmochelys imbricata* and *Chelonia mydas*, as well as causing pollution and silting of neighbouring bays noted for their mangroves.

National Parks, 61, 1-2.

Briefly . . .

South America

Guyana halts wildlife exports

Guyana stopped the commercial export of wild fauna on 28 February 1987 until further notice in order to allow work on a quota system and a revision of wildlife legislation. The ban will not affect the export of pets or flora.

Traffic Bulletin, VIII, 4.

New reserves for Suriname

Suriname has established four new nature reserves: Peruvia, 31,000 ha (77,000 acres) of swamp forest with numerous macaws; Upper Coesewijne, 27,000 ha (67,000 acres) of sandy savanna with giant river otters, manatees and caimans; Copi, 25,000 ha (62,000 acres) of savanna; and Wanekreek, 45,400 ha (112,000 acres) of savanna. In addition the Raleighvallen/Voltzberg Nature Reserve has been extended from 56,000 ha (138,000 acres) to 77,000 ha (190,000 acres). *CNPPA Members' Newsletter*, 38.

Peruvian reserve to be halved

New legislation will reduce a reserve on the Paracas Peninsula, 200 miles south of Lima in Peru, from 1.1 million acres (445,500 ha) to about half that amount, unless a last-minute conservation campaign prevents it. Local politicians responsible for the legislation and aware of the valuable mining and tourist potential have already built a road through the park. Some conservationists say the part of the reserve to be excised is already spoiled by fishermen who, attracted by the large banks of valuable scallops, have built villages there, and the only way to save the rest is to cut it off. Others warn that if Paracas is not saved, wildlife reserves all over Latin America will face threats from developers. The reserve has the world's greatest concentration of seabirds, is important for masses of migrating birds, and is a feeding ground for Andean condors.

The Miami Herald, 21 March 1987.

New bird from north-eastern Brazil

A new species, the long-tailed tyrannulet *Phylloscartes ceciliae*, has been described from the highland forest in the county of Murici, Alagoas, north-



A thin-spined porcupine, unrecorded for 30 years, photographed during a recent field survey (Ilmar Santos).

eastern Brazil. It is the first member of the genus recorded in this part of Brazil and, although the bird appears to be quite common in the type locality, it is difficult to locate because of its small size and arboreal habits. The Atlantic forests of north-eastern Brazil are in the final stages of destruction, and protected areas need to be established urgently to save the endemic fauna.

Teixeira, D. M. 1987, *Bull. Brit. Orn. Cl.* 107, 37–41.

The world's rarest porcupine?

The distribution and status of the thin-spined porcupine *Chaetomys subspinosus*, the only porcupine listed in IUCN's Red Data Book, and a number of other threatened mammals endemic to the southern Bahia and Espirito Santo sub-region of south-eastern Brazil, were the subject of a recent field survey by Ilmar Santos of the Federal University of Minas Gerais and William Oliver of the Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust. Previously known from only a handful of localities in southern Espirito Santo and southern Bahia, and last recorded over 30 years ago, a number of *Chaetomys* were seen during the course of this project, which also extended the species's known range into bordering areas of the neighbouring States of Sergipe, Minas Gerais and Rio de Janeiro.

William Oliver, *Jersey Wildlife Preservation Trust*.

Yanomami Indian Park announced

The Brazilian President has announced that 9000 sq km (3500 sq miles) of rain forest near the Venezuelan border is to be designated as a Yanomami Indian Park. The 8500 forest-dwelling Indians who live there have suffered severely from uncontrolled intrusion on their lands and have been the focus of an international campaign to help them. The President is under heavy pressure from commercial interests to reverse the decision.

Rainforest Action Network, Alert 12.

Spix's macaws confiscated

Two Spix's macaws *Cyanopsitta spixii* were confiscated in Paraguay from men who were planning to sell them in West Germany for about £25,000. They were taken months before in north-eastern Brazil from the only known Spix's macaw nest.

Daily Telegraph, 27 March 1987.

Australia/Antarctica

Tourism comes to remote peninsula

The 60 Aborigines who own the remote Cobourg Peninsula in Northern Territory, Australia, charge an entry fee and collect fees from trophy hunters—Aus\$2000 for a banteng *Bos javanicus*

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(believed to have arisen from abandoned domestic herds imported from Indonesia centuries before) and Aus\$500 for a sambar *Cervus unicolor* (introduced to the peninsula in 1912). The peninsula is leased to the Northern Territory Government as a sanctuary for Aus\$30,000 a year, and the Aborigine-controlled Cobourg Sanctuary Board has now advertised for an experienced tourist resort developer to establish a large-scale resort there. *Weekend Australia*, March 1987.

World Heritage listing opposed

A mining company, Geo Peko, and the Northern Territory Government of Australia opposed the listing of Kakadu National Park Stage II as a World Heritage Site, saying it would preclude mining activities in the park. A Northern Territory Government party travelled to Paris to lobby the 21 delegates at the World Heritage Committee meeting to oppose the listing made by the Federal Government.

Australian Conservation Foundation Newsletter, 18, 11.

Whale rescue

West Australia's most successful whale rescue occurred on 1 August 1986 when 96 stranded false killer whales *Pseudorca crassidens* were returned to the sea at Flinders Bay, Augusta. Only 18 are known to have died. Organized by the Department of Conservation and Land Management, the rescue involved hundreds of volunteers and government employees for three days. *Landscape*, 2, 2.

Cocos Islands get conservator

The Australian National Parks and Wildlife Service has appointed a Conservator to the Cocos (Keeling) Islands to implement the moratorium on the taking of wildlife, to monitor the bird populations and to introduce conservation measures (see *Oryx*, 21, 125). *World Birdwatch*, 9, 1.

Bell tolls for New Zealand Wildlife Service

The New Zealand Wildlife Service, which has achieved so much in rehabilitating offshore islands as refuges for

endangered species, was amalgamated on 31 March 1987 with the National Parks and Department of Environmental Forestry into a new Department of Conservation. All staff had to reapply for new posts, and some outstanding, but outspoken, conservationists from the Wildlife Service are failing to secure them.

W. R. P. Bourne

New Zealand forest protected at last

The New Zealand Government has decided to give legal protection to 137,000 ha (338,500 acres) of lowland forests on the West Coast, after a decade of effort by scientists and conservationists. The Paparoa National Park will be established, stretching from the peaks of the Paparoa Range to the coast at Punakaiki; and legal protection will be given to 58 ecological and scenic reserves and the North Westland Wildlife Corridor, a belt of forest 3 km (1.9 miles) wide and 50 km (31 miles) long, which joins many of the reserves. In addition, the total area of State Forest zoned for production purposes to support the West Coast timber industry has been reduced from 292,000 ha (722,000 acres) to 120,000 ha (297,000 acres) of native forest, and 20 new reserves of forests and wetlands have been proposed to cover a further 45,000 ha (111,000 acres). *Forest and Bird*, 17, 4.

New Zealand's new park

The Whanganui National Park (74,231 ha; 286 sq miles) was established on 6 December 1986, the first new national park in New Zealand for 22 years. *CNPPA Members' Newsletter*, 38.

Oceania

Protection for a tree

A large tree, *Serianthes nelsonii*, endemic to two of the Mariana Islands in the western Pacific, has been listed as Endangered by the US Fish and Wildlife Service. One tree is known on Guam, and 64 are known on Rota. Its future is imperilled by habitat degradation or destruction, typhoons, insect damage and introduced deer and pigs, which eat the seedlings.

Endangered Species Technical Bulletin, XII, 3.

Cook Islands join conservation convention

The Cook Islands Ministry of Foreign Affairs announced that on 12 August 1986, the Government approved the Cook Islands acceding to the Convention on Conservation of Nature in the South Pacific (APIA Convention) 1976. *Environment Newsletter*, 6.

Publications

Land-use changes and golden eagles

Blanket afforestation is the main long-term threat to Britain's population of golden eagles *Aquila chrysaetos*, according to the results of a four-year investigation by the Nature Conservancy Council. Britain has 420 pairs of eagles, almost all in the Scottish Highlands, and the population is of international importance, being the largest in Western Europe after those of Spain and northern Scandinavia. Their continued presence depends upon adequate stretches of open country where their main summer prey, ptarmigan and hares, are abundant. The report, *The impact of land-use changes on golden eagles Aquila chrysaetos in the Scottish Highlands* by J. Watson, D. R. Langslow and S. R. Rae is available from the NCC, Northminster House, Peterborough PE1 1UA, UK, for £2.50, including postage.

Reintroducing red squirrels

In a Zoological Society of London project sponsored by the National Provident Institution, 10 young red squirrels *Sciurus vulgaris* were trapped in Scotland in 1984 and released into Regent's Park in London. A report on the project, describing the rationale for the reintroduction, the methods, the outcome, the lessons learnt and the recommendations for future reintroductions has been published. It is available, price £2.00, from the Zoological Society of London, Regent's Park, London NW1 4RY, UK.

World Checklist of Threatened Mammals

Compiled by Tim Inskipp and Jonathan Barzdo, and published by the Nature

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Conservancy Council, this book provides English and scientific names of all species listed in CITES or appearing in the IUCN Red Data Books. It also lists all countries in which each species occurs, and there is a comprehensive list of 671 references (including many to papers in *Oryx*). Copies are available for £6.50 including postage, from Department BZ, Interpretive Services Branch, Nature Conservancy Council, Northminster House, Peterborough, PE1 1UA, UK.

Meetings

Symposium of Asian Pacific Mammalogy

This meeting, jointly sponsored by the American Society of Mammalogists and the Mammalogical Society of China, will be held on 26–30 July 1988 in China. Sessions will cover: Biology of the giant panda; Biology of primates; Conservation of endangered species; Medical and economic mammalogy; Systematics and faunistics of recent and fossil mammals; and Population, community and behavioural ecology. Details from: Dr Andrew T. Smith, Department of Zoology, Arizona State University, Tempe, AZ 85287, USA, or Professor Wang Sung, Institute of Zoology, Academia Sinica, 7 zhongguancun Lu, Haidian, Beijing, People's Republic of China.

National parks seminar

The 21st International Seminar on National Parks will be held in Michigan, 18 August–11 September 1987. Details from Hugh Bell Muller, Director, School of Natural Resources, University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, MI 48109, USA.

Wilderness conference

The 4th World Wilderness Conference is being held in Colorado, 11–18 September 1987. Details from International Wilderness Leadership Foundation, Colorado State University, Fort Collins, CO 80523, USA.

Herpetology congress

The First World Congress of Herpetology will be held at the University of Kent, Canterbury, UK, 11–19 194

September 1989. The FFPS is joint host with the University. Official registration will begin in January 1988 and those who wish to be sent further details as they become available should write to Dr Ian R. Swingland, Conference Director, World Congress of Herpetology, Rutherford College, University of Kent, Canterbury, Kent CT2 7NX, UK.

Symposium on protected landscapes

The International Symposium on Protected Landscapes is to be held in the Lake District National Park, UK, 5–10 October 1987. Details from John Foster, Birchover, Ferntower Road, Crieff, Perthshire PH7 3DH, UK.

Wildlife and sustainable development

A meeting on Wildlife and Sustainable Development in Sub-Saharan Africa will be held in Harare, Zimbabwe, 6–13 October 1987. Details from Bertrand des Clers, International Foundation for the Conservation of Game, 15 rue de Teheran, 75008 Paris, France.

Ornithological congress

The XX International Ornithological Congress will take place in Christchurch, New Zealand, 2–9 December 1990. Requests for the First Circular should be sent to Dr Ben D. Bell, Secretary-General, XX International Ornithological Congress, Department of Zoology, Victoria University of Wellington, Private Bag, Wellington, New Zealand.

People

Dr Graham Child has retired as Director of Zimbabwe's Department of National Parks and Wildlife.

Dr Stephen R. Edwards has been appointed Executive Officer of the Species Survival Commission of IUCN.

Vitus Fernando has been appointed as the Asian Affairs Co-ordinator for IUCN's Conservation for Development Centre.

Dr Ing. Pier Lorenzo Florio has resigned as Honorary Secretary of the Italian

Union of Zoological Gardens to take up a post as Director of TRAFFIC (Italy).

Professor Vernon H. Heywood has been appointed by IUCN as Director of the Botanic Gardens Conservation Secretariat and Associate Director for Plant Conservation of the Conservation Monitoring Centre, Kew, UK.

P. H. C. (Bing) Lucas has retired as Director General of New Zealand's Department of Lands and Survey. He was awarded the Queen's Service Order in recognition of his contribution to conservation.

Perez Olindo has been appointed Director of Kenya's Wildlife Conservation and Management Department.

Dr Peter H. Raven, Director of the Missouri Botanical Garden in the US, became the second recipient of the International Prize for Biology on 20 November 1986 in Tokyo, Japan. The prize was in recognition of his contribution to systematic biology.

The President of IUCN, Dr M. S. Swaminathan, has been awarded the Albert Einstein World Award of Science. The Award is presented annually for works that have improved life standards within their community and that have become known internationally for their excellence. Dr Swaminathan is also Director General of the Philippines-based International Rice Research Institute and was a leading figure in India's Green Revolution.

Obituaries

Dr John Gibbons, his wife, and their two children were drowned in an accident when their punt capsized near Lakeba, Fiji Islands, on 16 November 1986. Dr Gibbons had been a lecturer at the University of the South Pacific since 1978 and worked to conserve the iguanas of Fiji. He discovered a new species of iguana, the crested iguana *Brachylophus vitiensis*, there in 1979.

Dr Ronald T. Sauey, co-founder of the International Crane Foundation in Baraboo, Wisconsin, USA, died on 7 January after suffering a cerebral haemorrhage on 25 December 1986.

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