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As the trees tumble, profits leap...

For Malaysia the end of the world-wide recession in the timber market was signalled last year when the big buyers—Japan, West Europe, Singapore, South Korea, Taiwan—returned in force. The federation's gross earnings from export of saw logs were 117% up on the previous year. Sawn timber exports rose 110%. This upward trend was maintained into at any rate the first three months of this year when exports of saw logs were 35% up in volume and 70% in earnings over the same period last year. The equivalent increases for sawn timber exports were 31% and 40% respectively.

...for a few, for a while

Within the federation West Malaysia (Peninsular Malaysia) lags far behind Sabah and Sarawak in export of saw logs. But for sawn timber the picture is reversed. Here West Malaysia with its 700 mills is way out in front. In the timber-rich peninsular States of Perak and Pahang sawn timber is a vastly lucrative business—for those who can acquire the logging concessions.

The timber lobby is enormously powerful; sometimes it may even override security interests. In Perak although the military has publicly demanded a halt to logging in certain areas to allow operations against insurgents, the State Government has refused permission for fear of losing logging revenue.

Meanwhile in Pahang the rape of Endau Rompin continues with feverish intensity regardless of the Federal Government's known views and regardless of outraged cries from conservationists, business organizations, students, the local press and even sections of the ruling coalition parties.

The jungles of West Malaysia will (so it seems) soon be gone. A handful of people will be a lot richer—for a time. And the country will be a lot poorer for all time. In 1976 sawn timber exports topped 3 million cubic metres. In 1977 the figure will be higher still. This is a prodigious number of trees—far more even than the figures suggest. In Canada and Europe 80-90% of felled timber is recovered. In Malaysia 65% is left to rot.

More bite to "Endangered Species"

A special working session of Parties to the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species (CITES) met in Geneva for 10 days last month to seek ways of making the Convention into an effective policing force—a watchdog with bite.

A major issue was that of "readily recognizable parts and derivatives". The term poses a great problem for customs officers, and the Parties themselves differ in their interpretations. It was agreed that an identification manual would be an aid and arrangements were made to produce one. It was also agreed that Parties should prepare *minimum* lists of products on which trade is controlled.

A proposal that *importing* Parties should tighten their regulations was warmly received. At present the main onus of control falls on *exporters*. Methods of transporting live animals were agreed to be inadequate. The Secretariat will produce guidelines on this matter based on the regulations of the International Air Transport Association.

The first Conference of the Parties in Berne, November 1976, adopted criteria for amending the appendices. In Geneva a method of putting this into effect was agreed. Also in Berne the Parties had requested increased support for the Secretariat; in Geneva they expressed concern that support was still not on the scale required.

Although the meeting was not a full Conference of the Parties, adopted proposals carry great weight as being the considered view of the Parties on matters of importance. Those affecting the Secretariat will be implemented forthwith. Others will come before the second Conference of the Parties (Costa Rica, February 1979) as official resolutions.

A more detailed report of the meeting now follows.

Readily recognizable

CITES requires that trade be restricted not only in certain animals and plants but also in "readily recognizable parts and derivatives". This is at best a loose term—and may sometimes be used as an escape clause by hard-pressed customs officers.

If carved ivory, say, or shoes made of tanned crocodilian skins are not "readily

recognizable", then trade would not in theory be controlled. In practice some Parties (the US for one) adopt the philosophy that any item which a customs officer can identify—sometimes with the help of museum or zoo experts—is, by the very act of identification, "readily recognizable".

As an aid to customs, Switzerland proposed *minimum enforcement controls*—a list of products to which trading restrictions automatically apply. The proposal was adopted, although some participants felt that one man's minimum would be another's maximum and that on balance such a measure might *weaken* enforcement.

Other means of assisting customs officers were discussed at length. The proposed identification manual will be produced by a committee of the Parties under the guidance of technical experts—each Party thereafter adapting it for its own use.

Amending the appendices

Last year in Berne it was felt that the appendices did not always reflect the true status of a species, and criteria for amending them were accordingly adopted. The Geneva meeting agreed that by the end of this year the Parties would advise the Secretariat—which would act as co-ordinating body—of species which they themselves would review and of those they wished the Secretariat to review. The Secretariat was also requested to undertake in conjunction with IUCN a similar review of taxa in either appendix not being reviewed by the Parties.

Although the tremendous scope of this task was recognized, no concrete arrangements were made to provide the necessary resources to ensure timely compliance.

Transporting live specimens

The Convention requires that methods of transporting living specimens must ensure their wellbeing. Delegates were unanimous that present methods stand in great need of improvement and standardization. Too often animals are neither safely secured nor humanely provided for. Vast numbers die in transit, thus greatly heightening the pressure on species in the wild.

(Continued on back page)

News from Members

Eskimo knell for the bowhead?

Friends of the Earth, US, have run into heavy flak from other conservationists. On 8 September they "regretfully" urged the US Department of Commerce to file an objection to the International Whaling Commission's withdrawal of Eskimo rights to hunt the bowhead whale.

Shortly afterwards FoE learned of a new option. The US could request a delay in the deadline for filing an objection until after meetings of the IWC Scientific Committee in November and the IWC itself in December. At these meetings the Eskimo, as part of the US delegation, could present their case. FoE pressed the US to take this option.

In the event the US has not (so far) filed an objection but has placed the bowhead on the agenda of both IWC meetings. The Scientific Committee is being asked to review US research and management plans for the bowhead, and these plans will then be presented to the IWC December meeting which will be asked to reconsider its verdict.

FoE's argument

FoE's case, in summary, is as follows. Today the main population of the bowhead migrates between the Beaufort and the Bering Seas. It is hunted only by the Eskimo and only for subsistence purposes. Commercial whaling is not the issue.

The people chiefly affected are the Inupiat of Northern Alaska. Hitherto the IWC has never regulated subsistence harvests. The Inupiat now suddenly find their take reduced to zero — without consultation and without being a party to the IWC resolution.

In their testimony to the Department of Commerce, FoE said that this was "absolutely no way to treat a people whose cultural, economic and nutritional well-being are so intertwined with hunting of the bowhead". FoE also pointed out that "enforcement of a zero quota may be impossible, given terrain, conditions of the hunt and the volatile nature of the issue. Yet for the US to ignore the ban would make a farce of the IWC process". An effective regulatory programme must have Inupiat backing.

Human rights issue

FoE conceded that "one of the major arguments against the US filing an objection is the effect such a step would have internationally as all countries struggle to protect the Great Whales. But the US can take the position that a clear human rights issue is involved".

In a letter to government officials in Washington, the President of FoE International, David Brower, said that there is a problem of "poor hunting techniques" (whales being killed or struck — and lost) but that "native leaders are concerned about this and do believe that corrective

action should be taken". In support of this contention FoE point out that at a recent meeting of 70 whaling captains in Barrow, Northern Alaska, "an Alaskan Eskimo Whaling Commission was created to develop methods for efficient hunting. In addition a proposal has already been put together by the Inupiat for the intensive study of the bowhead to establish reliable data upon which to base further actions".

Aboriginals will help manage national park

Australia will shortly have two national parks in the Northern Territory. In both parks Aboriginal rights will be fully safeguarded. Aboriginals now own almost one-fifth of the Territory and comprise one-quarter of its sparse population.

Uluru, the first national park to be declared under federal legislation, was gazetted last May. Occupying 1260 sq km of central Australia, it contains two dominant physical features: Ayers Rock (claimed to be the largest rock in the world) and the Olga mountains. These huge monoliths act as water catchments which feed the surrounding vegetation.

The fact that in this arid land more or less permanent surface water is found at the base of Ayers Rock has given rise to a wealth of Aboriginal mythology. Caves contain Aboriginal paintings, while Ayers Rock and the Olgas were — and are — the scene of important rituals. Parts of the park are set aside for secret Aboriginal ceremonies.

With people from all over the world coming to climb Ayers Rock and to see the spectacular colour changes at sunset and sunrise, the surrounding land has suffered. The Government has begun a major rehabilitation programme.

To rank with the greatest

The second national park, Kakadu, will be in the Alligator Rivers region, which contains one of the world's largest known reserves of uranium. The Government's unequivocal commitment to the park follows a two-year public enquiry.

Kakadu will be established progressively and will finally cover 12,500 sq km and rank with the great national parks of the world. Of outstanding grandeur, Kakadu contains about 1000 species of plants and a great variety of animals. Some of the plants and animals are not known elsewhere and the park provides their only hope for survival. Huge congregations of water birds are another feature and more than one-third of all Australian bird species occur here.

Aboriginal art sites in Kakadu are among the finest anywhere. Aboriginal land rights have been recognized over most of the park, and title to the land will be given to the traditional owners who will lease it to the Director National Parks and Wildlife. Aboriginals wanted the land to

become a national park because they see this as being compatible with their own traditional use. They will form an important part of the park management.

With Aboriginal interests, mining interests, recreation and conservation all to be catered for, great skill will be required to manage Kakadu so that its outstanding natural values are properly conserved. IUCN has on several occasions drawn attention to the significance of the region and will be watching with particular interest to see how the Government's enlightened actions work out. The concept of a national park in which Aboriginal peoples are not only consulted but given managerial status sets a precedent which deserves success.

Egyptian Committee for IUCN

Last January Egypt's Academy of Scientific Research and Technology established a National Committee for IUCN. Its 21 members are drawn from the sciences and other professions and include representatives from national institutions. The Committee coordinates closely with the National Committee for MAB — whose Project 8, "conservation of natural areas and the genetic material they contain", will now be taken on as an IUCN Committee activity.

Since its inauguration the Committee has held several meetings and will complete a plan of action for conservation in Egypt. High priority will be given to: collecting information on endangered animals and plants; formulating proposals for a network of reserves and gathering ecological data about their proposed locations; organizing and carrying out actions to increase public awareness of environmental issues.

Sabah acts to save turtles

Congratulations to the State of Sabah, East Malaysia. The famous Turtle Islands off Sabah's northeast coast officially became a national park on 1 October. Appropriate controls and regulations are now in force and all trawling vessels are excluded. This reserve is of immense value to the world of conservation. The Turtle Islands, 1700 hectares in extent, have been described as "probably the most valuable nesting area of the green and hawksbill turtles in South East Asia".

Thousands of turtles also nest on the adjoining islands belonging to the Philippines. The Government is being requested (by IUCN and others) to see that the nesting sites are granted full protection.

Ecologists will meet in Argentina

The Sixth *Reunión Argentina de Ecología* will take place in Corrientes, Argentina, from 21-28 May 1978. For further details write to: Doctor Ricardo Luti, Presidente de la Asociación de Ecología, Centro de Ecología y Recursos Naturales Renovables, Universidad Nacional de Córdoba, CC 395, 5000 — Córdoba, Argentina.

Threatened deer

A progress report on the Threatened Deer Programme was published in the March *Bulletin*. This further report deals with the outcome of a UNEP-funded meeting concerned with the Programme. It also gives details of how the endangered sub-species of swamp deer in India has been rescued from the brink of extinction. This is a considerable success story.

Deer prosper—where funds allow

Members and field workers of IUCN's Deer Specialist Group met in Longview, Washington State, on 26 September-1 October to review progress on the Threatened Deer Programme and to

compile a dossier on the restoration of threatened species with special reference to deer.

At present there are 10 major field projects in the Programme. The three that are now in the conservation phase (for the southern race of swamp deer, in India, the Persian fallow deer, in Iran, and the Bactrian deer, in USSR) have all recorded good increases in deer population.

Although lack of funds has hampered development of the Programme, the Deer Group is preparing a five-year plan to cover field projects for nine additional species and sub-species, to provide further support for two existing projects and to fund, at least in part, essential supporting projects—for example on systematics, captive animals, human sociology and applied biogeography. The overall cost could

exceed \$500,000, but it is hoped that the achievements of the present Programme will help to attract funds.

Guidelines on threatened species

The Threatened Deer Programme was developed as a pilot exercise in comprehensive management of threatened species. The second half of the Longview meeting was thus devoted to considering some dozen draft papers on this subject. Prepared by Deer Group members, the papers form the basis for a dossier which in its final form will comprise criteria and guidelines for the restoration of threatened species. It is primarily directed to the needs of field researchers and managers, government agencies, and the project screening units of conservation funding bodies.

The proceedings of the meeting, case histories of threatened deer projects, and the dossier criteria and papers will be published by IUCN in a single volume in April 1978.

A mystery solved and a deer saved

A few years back Kanha National Park in India had a mystery on its hands. Why was the swamp deer declining so fast? After all, the national park, the deer's habitat, had been a fairly well protected sanctuary since 1933. Witness the fact that between 1938 and 1970 chital numbers had increased from 2800 to 4000. Yet during the same period the swamp deer had declined from over 3000 to just 66.

A hunting ban imposed in 1954 had brought no improvement. Admittedly anti-poaching controls were at that time inadequate, but if poaching was the problem, then why was the chital thriving?

In 1969 the perilous state of the deer was brought up at the IUCN General Assembly in New Delhi. A programme to save the species was launched and was expanded in March 1971 when Claude Martin from Zurich University began what turned out to be a most productive 2-year study on the status and ecology of the swamp deer in Kanha.

Fawn deaths

At the outset one unsolved problem was the high death rate among fawns. Was brucellosis the cause? Tests proved negative. It was then suggested that part of the trouble might come from the long-established practice of burning the Kanha meadows during the December-January cool season to lessen fire risks during the summer.

Burning certainly stimulated the growth of green shoots from rhizomes, but these attracted ungulates in such large numbers that the more palatable grasses disappeared. In a controlled experiment in 1971-2 unburnt areas gave sturdier growth and richer fodder. For the swamp deer this meant a marked improvement in food supply. It also meant a safer breeding ground. For now the grasses could once

again grow tall enough to conceal the fawns from predators.

Enter the tiger

The tiger too was not blameless—though the fault was more man's than the tiger's. In 1964 in order to give tourists a brighter chance of seeing a tiger, two regular "baiting sites" were set up in the Kanha meadows, the only home of the swamp deer. As a result no less than eight tigers took up residence in the area and the deer suffered accordingly.

In 1969 the baiting sites were moved and deer casualties fell dramatically. In the same year the deer's grassland habitat was almost doubled by putting a stop to cattle

grazing in meadows north of Kanha and by moving the village of Sonf.

Since then further remedial steps have been taken. Thanks to Project Tiger the national park has grown from 318 to 940 sq km and a total of 20 villages have now been moved to new quarters outside the park. All cattle grazing of the Kanha meadows has consequently ceased. Coupled with a ban (since 1972-73) on the annual firing of the meadows this has meant a recovery of the vegetation and hence a sharp and healthy increase in fawn survival.

Poaching is now effectively controlled and the water regime has been improved by putting a halt to forest clearance and the cultivation of marginal lands. The net result of all these measures is that the swamp deer population now stands (June '77) at 284—four times the 1970 figure.

Reinforcements for IUCN Headquarters

Earl Baysinger has joined IUCN at Morges on a 2-year assignment from the US Fish and Wildlife Service where he was Chief of the newly established International Affairs Staff. Prior to that he had been Deputy Chief of the Office of Endangered Species. He will serve as Executive Officer to the Survival Service Commission.

Baysinger's international experience includes several years abroad in Germany and Taiwan, five years on the Board of Governors of the US/Spain Environmental Agreement and Chairman of one of the Projects under the US/USSR Agreement on Cooperation in the Field of Environmental Protection. In 1972 he was a member of that Agreement's first delegation to the USSR and it was under his Project that the recently signed US/USSR Convention for the Protection of Migratory

Birds and their Environment was signed.

Harold Eidsvik has been seconded to IUCN for a period of two to three years by Parks Canada and the US National Parks Service. He is Deputy Chairman of the Commission on National Parks and Protected Areas and will now serve as the Commission's Executive Officer.

Eidsvik's career has been in provincial and national parks' planning in Canada. His last post was as Senior Policy Adviser for Parks Canada in Ottawa. He is an associate professor with the School of Landscape Architecture at the University of Guelph, Ontario, and for the last three years has taught a course in Outdoor Recreation Management at the University of Ottawa. His association with IUCN dates from 1969 when he attended the General Assembly in New Delhi.

Small will always be beautiful

Barbara Ward writes: Anyone fortunate enough to have known Fritz Schumacher (who died on 5 September) will now be chiefly mourning the loss of a friend who combined a remarkable innovating intelligence and rigour of mind with the greatest gentleness and humour. But what the world has lost is of far greater importance.

It was in the Sixties that Dr Schumacher first sounded a warning note. He began asking, on behalf of countries desperately short of capital but with an abundant and growing labour force, how high-cost technology could lead to anything but economic and social disruption. He was the first Western expert to argue that in such areas as India (and, by implication, China) the prime needs in the rural areas were workplaces with capital costs in the \$100-1000 range and tools and machinery which would use to the full the manpower and the human skills locally available.

This "Appropriate Technology" would conform to local requirements and permit the most rapid and socially acceptable forms of growth. Dr Schumacher foresaw that undue priority given to, say, the petrochemical complex—which can demand \$10,000,000 in investment and provide just 150 jobs—or to the automobile assembly line or, indeed, to the Green Revolution itself, would lead in the Third World to huge indebtedness abroad and to spreading underemployment and deepening maldistribution of income at home.

What was prophecy in 1965 is certainty in 1977. But Dr Schumacher was not content to be a prophet. His best known book *Small is Beautiful* belongs in some measure to the category of exhortation but his literal invention of the concept of Appropriate Technology and his establishment of an institution—the Intermediate Technology Development Group—to study its implications and encourage its widespread use, has revolutionized the policies of international lending agencies and (more slowly) of governments throughout the world.

The sheer scale of the impact is almost unbelievable when it is seen to be what it is—the inspiration of a single man. For instance, by 1982 UNEP hopes to have established "a global network of institutions to test, apply and publish advice on appropriate and environmentally sound technology". WHO has introduced a new programme entitled Appropriate Technology for Health. The International Labour Organization and the UN Industrial Development Organization are developing appropriate technology programmes. Several agencies, UNICEF for one, have recognized that only small-scale technology and full local involvement can assure rural water supplies and sanitation. UNDP is working in the irrigation sector. The World Bank is expanding its rural development efforts.

These signs of a new direction in development thinking can be found in national

aid programmes. Britain's Overseas Development Ministry has set aside over \$2 million for work on Appropriate Technology, largely in cooperation with Dr Schumacher's Intermediate Technology Development Group. The Americans have gone further. A special agency, Appropriate Technology International, has been set up within their aid agency with a starting fund of \$20 million from US Aid and it is no secret that Dr Schumacher played a direct role in its establishment.

The Dutch and Swedish Governments are also increasing their interest in this sphere and it is perhaps of melancholy interest to notice that in the very week of Dr Schumacher's untimely death, the Asian Development Bank published a fairly complete study of the effects in Asia of the Green Revolution (supported by so many aid agencies), reporting on its general failure to increase food production on the needed scale and its tendency to increase social disruption, the flight from the land and the swelling up of vast urban megalopolises where adequate employment, hopes of education and even the minimum decencies of life are simply not available for at least a third of the inhabitants.

There are those in the Third World who see the whole concept of Appropriate Technology as one more Western plot to keep the poorer countries in a state of abject dependence. It is probably for this reason that developing nations refused to accept a resolution at the 1976 ILO World Employment Conference, proposing the establishment of an International Institute for Appropriate Technology.

But the fear is misplaced. China has based most of its crucial rural development on Appropriate Technology and by doing so has actually increased its independence from more industrialized societies. Labour-intensive techniques can lay a secure basis for later use of what is valuable in more sophisticated technology and science. And not all modern "breakthroughs" are valuable simply because they are modern. For instance, if appropriate agricultural technology helps to minimize the use of a whole range of lethal pesticides, herbicides and fungicides, people will not only have enough to eat, they will avoid the dreadful deaths and injuries to which so many Third World farmers and labourers have succumbed through use and misuse of these chemicals.

Dr Schumacher's own thinking was profoundly shaped and influenced by his direct experience in the Third World. It was after serving as economic adviser first to Burma in the 1950s and in India in the early '60s that, influenced by Buddhist thought and Gandhian philosophy, he began to evolve his concepts of a technology appropriate to each people's own cultural tradition and his "economics as though people mattered". In a very real sense his thought was a gift from the Third World to the first and the lessons he devoted his life to teaching may turn out, sooner than we expect, to be as relevant to New York City as to Lagos or Bombay.

Barbara Ward is President of the International Institute for Environment and Development, is author of several books on development and was Albert Schweitzer Professor of International Economic Development at Columbia University, 1968-73.

Letters

Involve the people — especially students

Sir. As wildlife enthusiasts we are happy to note that IUCN and WWF are preparing projects for the preservation of the ecosystem in the western Ghats (May *Bulletin*) and have contributed a great deal to *Project Tiger* and the elephant project.

Unfortunately conservation organizations, particularly in India, are little known outside big cities, and it is vital to gain more support. One way is to have more literature on wildlife and allied subjects in Hindi, which is the national language. Also, membership/subscription fees of such bodies should be reduced and fees calculated on the number of members in the organization and its budget — as suggested by Dr Talbot (again in the May *Bulletin*).

Another suggestion, particularly applicable to Indian conditions, is that big conservation organizations like IUCN, WWF and the Bombay Natural History Society (BNHS) should have more

branch offices. Wildlife management and conservation (not to be confused with zoology and botany) should also be made separate subjects in schools and colleges. Students would then join organizations like the Indian Board for Wildlife. Being students ourselves we are not in a position to say whether these suggestions are feasible. However some such measures will have to be taken if wildlife is to be seen as a necessity rather than a luxury.

As boys belonging to the Kumaon region we are naturally concerned about our diminishing forests and wildlife. The land of Jim Corbett's famous *Man-eaters of Kumaon* is now without even a fraction of its former wildlife. Ghoral, serow, barking deer, musk deer, chir, kokala and monal pheasant face extinction unless something is done immediately. A preliminary survey sponsored jointly by WWF and BNHS would lead to the right emergency action.

Pratap, Kumer and Rajinder Singh,
Fur & Feathers, Charlton Lodge
Naini Tal, India

Books

The mammals of Pakistan

by T. J. Roberts

Ernest Benn, 361 pp, 90 figures, 95 species illustrations, 118 distribution maps, £35.00

This book meets a long-felt need for an up-to-date, standard work on the mammalian fauna of Pakistan. The author, who modestly describes himself as "only an amateur naturalist", has spent half of his life in Pakistan, is well-known to IUCN as a regular and meticulous contributor to the Red Data Book volumes, and is eminently qualified to undertake this task.

Pakistan stretches from the high mountains of the Himalayas to the hot deserts of Sind, and represents a transitional zone between two major zoogeographical regions, the Palaearctic and the Oriental. In consequence it has a very rich and varied fauna, and this book deals with a total of 158 species, some of which have not previously been mentioned in existing reference books and check-lists for the area.

Introductory chapters cover zoogeography and habitat types, and ecological adaptations of mammals to desert conditions. The bulk of the book comprises an account of the species, systematically arranged, with identification keys and data on description, distribution and status, and biology. The last includes both conventional biology and etho-ecology of the species, drawn from the literature and the author's own field studies. The text is supplemented by distribution maps for most species and by numerous plates and drawings. Appendices cover field methods, a bibliography, a gazetteer, and glossaries of vernacular and technical terms.

The population growth of Pakistan is one of the highest in the world, and the section of the book dealing with distribution and status of mammals records the inevitable decline of many species, especially the larger ones. This book should make a substantial contribution to the data base for comprehensive nature conservation plans for Pakistan that are now in preparation.

Colin Holloway

The cave bear story

by Björn Kurtén

Columbia University Press, 163 pp, 33 line drawings, 5 photographs, 6 maps, \$11.20

The cave bear story appears to be a stab at popularizing palaeontology. It attempts to put flesh and fur back on the skull and bones of the cave bear *Ursus spelaeus*, a creature which lived, largely on the European continent, between 300,000 and 10,000 years ago. While there could be great drama in recreating what once was, the book falls short, mainly because of an irritating unevenness of style. The author does not seem to have defined his target audience—the reader is either talked down to or hit with quite specialized scientific jargon. For example, in one chapter Kurtén

writes "... So the head of a bear, or of any mammal for that matter, has a purpose, or rather a number of purposes". Yet in another section the insulted reader is faced with "bimodal frequency curves" and "inadaptive genetic drift".

The mountain gorilla

by George B. Schaller

The University of Chicago Press, 429 pp, 35 plates, 52 other illustrations, £4.50

This thoroughly documented account of Dr. Schaller's two year field study of the mountain gorilla (*Gorilla gorilla beringei*) will become a standard text among primatologists and those non-professionals who are simply interested in the facts behind what makes the real King Kong tick.

The Serengeti lion

by George B. Schaller

The University of Chicago Press, 480 pp, 43 plates, 32 figures, 8 line drawings, £11.90 (cloth); £5.45 (softback)

This is the paperback edition of Schaller's highly acclaimed (National Book Award) opus. Definitely *not* light reading, neither in substance (it's a serious study of predator-prey relations) nor in form (480 pages worth).

The river people

by Philip Wayne

Collins and Harvill Press, 189 pp, 6 colour and 35 black and white photographs, £3.95

Don't be fooled by the ill-chosen title of this book. It is not an anthropological study of some aquaphilic human tribe but a story about otters. The first two-thirds of the book is a personal account of various otters the author has known and loved. The final third describes a Malaysian expedition in search of the hairy-nosed, smooth-coated and short-clawed species. A pity the text never reaches the heights of tenderness, humour or just plain appeal of the marvellous accompanying photographs.

Badgers

by Ernest Neal

Blandford Press, 321 pp, 38 colour and 23 black and white photographs, 44 other illustrations, £7.25

A sett-to-grave comprehensive celebration of the European badger *Meles meles*. Dr Neal not only thoroughly describes the ethology, ecology and physiology of this zebra-faced member of the mustelid family, but also helpfully suggests field methods (including equipment) which can be used by the seasoned and tyro badger-watcher to locate and monitor the object of their nocturnal affections. The final chapter is a capsulized discussion of all species of badger in the world. Throughout the book the excellent text is supported by quality charts, drawings and photographs.

Guide to medicinal plants

by Paul Schauenberg and Ferdinand Paris

Lutterworth Press, 349 pp, 39 full-colour plates, 46 line drawings, £5.95

Medicinal plants

by Hans Flück

Foulsham, 188 pp, 150 full-colour illustrations, £2.95

Mitton's practical modern herbal

by F. and V. Mitton

Foulsham, 134 pp, many line drawings, £2.95

A guide to wild plants: the edible and poisonous species of the Northern Hemisphere

by Michael Jordan

Millington, 240 pp, 106 full-colour photographs, £5

A growing number of Europeans and North Americans are becoming interested in wild plants as sources of food and medicine, and these four books are signs of that interest. The first two are translations of Swiss works, the former being more "serious" (organized by effective compounds) and dealing with 400 species, the latter being a simple introduction to 150 species. The Mittons' book is more evangelically herbalist. Jordan's book is a pleasant and useful treatment of the edible and poisonous wild plant species of northern Europe. The coverage of all four titles is restricted to Europe.

Libro rojo de los lepidopteros Ibéricos

by Manuel G. de Viedma and Miguel R. Gomez Bustillo

Instituto Nacional para la Conservación de la Naturaleza, Madrid, 117 pp, 81 colour photographs (softback). No price given.

This first book ever of threatened butterflies and moths is a fine achievement by Spanish entomologists. The book includes 50 taxa—illustrated in full colour—out of 3500 species found in the Iberian Peninsula. Each carries a brief text and a sketch map showing distribution (although in the case of two or three species a printer's error seems to have crept in—both text and map are missing).

The text is under four headings: distribution and flight period, habitat and life history, status and population, conservation measures proposed. For ease of reference an expanded version of the IUCN colour code is used on the corner of each page—endangered (red), vulnerable (amber), rare (white), endemic (yellow), migratory (blue).

Information on distribution is still far from complete and the authors are at pains to recommend further work to improve it. They should however be congratulated on being the first to publish a Red Book of Lepidoptera.

Traffic in tusks and skins

The worldwide traffic in ivory (much of it poached and smuggled) accounted last year for at least 100,000 and maybe as many as 400,000 African elephants. This is the estimate of Iain Douglas-Hamilton, co-Chairman of IUCN's Elephant Group. What controlling effects, if any, is CITES having on this traffic?

Since February last the animal has been listed in Appendix II. Parties are now required to see that export permits accompany *all* imports of African ivory—even from non-Parties.

The requirement, though, is less than a year old. It will not be until some time next year when trade statistics for 1977 are published that the full picture will begin to emerge. And only then if *detailed* records are kept by both customs officials and export-licensing authorities so that proper comparisons can be made.

The United Kingdom pattern

It so happens, however, that such records are already available for the United Kingdom, and IUCN's TRAFFIC Group has been examining them. The UK has been requiring export licences for all raw (unworked) ivory since 1976—and goes one better than CITES in requiring import licences as well.

In the UK the Department of the Environment (DoE) is the licensing authority. For 1976 DoE's records show that 5000 kg of raw ivory were imported under licence—licences for this amount were returned by customs officials to DoE. However *total* 1976 imports of raw ivory, as recorded by customs, came to 27,426 kg.

Does this mean that of British ivory imports, over 80% (equivalent to 1700 elephants) was unlicensed? Probably not.

For in 1976 DoE issued import licences (they are issued on request) for at least 75,000 kg—70,000 kg more than were apparently taken up. So it seems likely that in many cases, perhaps most, licences were shown but not surrendered (as they should have been) or surrendered but not forwarded (as they should have been) to DoE.

So much for conjecture. The fact remains that the two sets of import figures should tally and they don't, nowhere near.

UK exports of ivory in 1976 exceeded imports (do tusks breed in storage?). But whereas customs returns show that 32,491 kg left the country, export licences returned to DoE account for only about 17,000 kg. Again a serious discrepancy.

Curiouser and curiouser

Turning from elephants to cats, the variations in the 1976 figures for imports of cat skins (excluding made-up coats etc) are even more bizarre. The DoE returns show that imports covered by licence came to 19,592 skins. Something like five times this number of import licences were issued. And 25 *times* this number—as shown by customs returns—entered the country. That until this year not all wild felines were covered by the Convention may account for a part of this huge discrepancy, but not the whole of it.

While DoE has been most commendably scrupulous in keeping detailed records of traffic in all species covered by the Endangered Species Act, it seems that customs officials have sometimes been lax. However it should be said that teething problems were almost certain to occur. Doubtless they will now be put right. In any case would other Parties show up in a better light if their data were published?

Endangered Species (continued)

The Parties agreed that the Secretariat should produce a complete set of guidelines covering all forms of transport and applying to all animals. The IUCN Survival Service's TRAFFIC Group will assist in this task.

Duty of importing nations

On the final day an important proposal was put forward by Sweden. The Convention stipulates that all trade in Appendix II species and derivatives must be accompanied by an export permit. And such permits may be issued only when the Scientific Authority of the exporting Party attests that the export will not imperil the survival of the species. Furthermore if the shipment originates in a *non-Party* country, the importing nation must require documentation substantially similar to that required of a Party.

But are these rules being rigorously applied? Importing countries have, in the words of the proposal, "a duty to regulate their contributions to this trade until such time as export regulations are operative in all countries in which the species occurs".

One obvious means of effecting this is for importing countries either unilaterally or in cooperation to establish quotas.

While the Swedish proposal came too late for the precise wording to be agreed and adopted, it received broad support. Among the Parties who welcomed it were the substantial "producer" nations of Nepal, Ghana, South Africa and USSR. Observers from UNEP and IUCN were wholly in favour and felt that such a measure would greatly strengthen the Convention. Sweden will prepare a working document for discussion at the next Conference of the Parties.

Support for the Secretariat

Finally to a matter which was not on the agenda but which greatly exercised delegates and was the subject of keen discussion. All 20 Parties that were present expressed concern that the resolution adopted in Berne in November 1976 calling for a substantial increase in Secretariat funding (to cope with the substantial increase in volume of work) was not being complied with. A letter to this effect was drafted by the Parties and sent to the Executive Director of UNEP.

Hong Kong about to come into line

After the Berne Conference last November Hong Kong invoked the 90-day rule and entered a reservation for the African elephant. At Geneva last month the UK delegation announced that Hong Kong was about to withdraw this reservation.

The position at present is that Hong Kong exerts no controls over ivory imports. Some idea of their volume comes from the 1976 trade figures on ivory traffic between Kenya and Hong Kong. *Officially* Kenya exported to Hong Kong somewhere between 50 tons (the Ministry of Tourism and Wildlife figure) and 68 tons (the Customs and Excise figure). Hong Kong *records* importing from Kenya 235 tons.

Customs officers' Identification Manual — chapter 1.??

If the species you're examining
is very big and strong,
If its legs resemble tree trunks
and its nose is mighty long,
If its ears are large and flappy
with a tusk on either side,
If it trumpets when you smack it
on its thick and hairy hide,
It's an elephant.

"Tree farming" could help save the world's remaining forests

"Tree farming" means planting and cultivating trees as if they were an agricultural crop. Like other crops, the trees would be harvested regularly three or four years after planting for use as fuel or fodder. American and other scientists have been studying this method of growing trees and are convinced of its enormous potential.

The US Agency for International Development (AID) already has studies underway in the Philippines, Indonesia and Nepal to help develop tree farming for small producers. As well as providing fuel, tree farming can offer employment to rural people, provide an energy base for rural industries and assure a continuing supply of wood to paper and other wood-based industries.

AID officials have been meeting with experts from the National Academy of Sciences, the World Bank, universities and private industry. The Agency is also liaising with conservation and development bodies in the countries concerned. It hopes to develop an agreed strategy on tree farming within the next few months.

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